

# FREE BIBLE COMMENTARY

## NEW TESTAMENT SPECIAL TOPICS

By Dr. Bob Utley, Retired Professor of Hermeneutics

The following New Testament Special Topics are taken from our verse by verse commentaries. They deal with:

1. Word studies
2. Theological issues
3. Hermeneutical issues
4. Cultural issues
5. Geographical issues
6. “Hot button” issues in the church today

We hope this will be a quick way for you to access these topics.

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## NEW TESTAMENT SPECIAL TOPICS

### SPECIAL TOPIC: “ABIDING” IN JOHN’S WRITINGS

John’s Gospel describes a special relationship between God the Father and Jesus the Son. It is a mutual intimacy based on subjection and equality. Throughout the Gospel, Jesus speaks what He hears the Father saying, does what He sees the Father doing. Jesus does not act on His own, but on the will of the Father.

This intimate fellowship and servanthood sets the pattern for the relationship between Jesus and His followers. This intimate association was not the absorption of the individual (as in eastern mysticism), but an ethical, moral lifestyle of emulation. Fellowship was (1) cognitive (the world-view of the gospel as the Word of God); (2) relational (Jesus was God’s promised Messiah to be trusted in and leaned on); and (3) Christlikeness (His

character reproduced in godly believers).

Jesus is the ideal man, the true Israelite, the standard of humanity. He reveals what Adam should have, and could have been (humanly speaking). Jesus is the ultimate “image of God.” He restores the fallen image in mankind by (1) revealing God; (2) dying on our behalf (substitutionary atonement); and (3) providing humans an example to follow. The term “abiding” (*menō*) reflects the goal of Christlikeness (cf. Rom. 8:29), the restoration of the Fall (cf. Gen. 3).

This reunion of God and His ultimate creation, mankind, for the purpose of fellowship is the Apostle Paul’s “in Christ” and the Apostle John’s “abide in Me.”

Notice John’s usage:

1. Abiding between the Father and Son
  - a. the Father in the Son (John 10:38; 14:10,11,20; 17:21,23)
  - b. the Son in the Father (John 10:38; 14:10,11,20; 17:21)
2. Abiding between deity and the believer
  - a. the Father in the believer (John 14:20,23; I John 3:24; 4:12-13,15)
  - b. the believer in the Father (John 14:20,23; 17:21; I John 2:24,27; 4:13,16)
  - c. the Son in the believer (John 6:56; 14:20,23; 15:4,5; 17:21,23)
  - d. the believer in the Son (John 6:56; 14:20,23; 15:4,5,7; I John 2:6,24,27,28)
3. Other abiding elements (positive)
  - a. the word of God
    - 1) negatively (John 5:38; 8:37; I John 1:10; II John 9)
    - 2) positively (John 8:31; 15:2; I John 2:14,24; II John 9)
  - b. the love of God (John 15:9-10; 17:26; I John 3:17; 4:16)
  - c. the Spirit of God
    - 1) on the Son (John 1:32)
    - 2) in the believer (John 14:17)
  - d. obedience is abiding (John 15:10; I John 3:24)
  - e. love is abiding in light (I John 2:10)
  - f. doing the will of God is abiding (I John 2:17)
  - g. anointing abides (I John 2:27)
  - h. truth abides (II John 2)
  - i. the Son abides (John 8:35; 12:34)
4. Other abiding elements (negative)
  - a. the wrath of God abides (John 3:36)
  - b. abide in darkness (John 12:46)
  - c. thrown away. . . burned (not abiding) (John 15:6)
  - d. sinning (not abiding) (I John 3:6)
  - e. not loving (not abiding) (I John 3:14)
  - f. no murderer (not eternal life abiding) (I John 3:15)
  - g. in death (I John 3:14)

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: ADOPTIONISM

This was one of the early views of Jesus’ relation to deity. It basically asserted that Jesus was a normal human in every way and was adopted in a special sense by God at his baptism (cf. Matt. 3:17; Mark 1:11) or at His resurrection (cf. Rom. 1:4). Jesus lived such an exemplary life that God, at some point, (baptism, resurrection) adopted Him as His “son” (cf. Rom. 1:4; Phi. 2:9). This was an early church and eighth century minority view. Instead of God becoming a man (the Incarnation) it reverses this and now man becomes God!

It is difficult to verbalize how Jesus, God the Son, pre-existent deity, was rewarded or extolled for an exemplary life. If He was already God, how could He be rewarded? If He had pre-existent divine glory how could He be honored more? Although it is hard for us to comprehend, the Father somehow honored Jesus in a special sense for His perfect fulfillment of the Father’s will.

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## TOPIC: THIS AGE AND THE AGE TO COME

The OT prophets viewed the future by an extension of the present. For them the future will be a restoration of geographical Israel. However, even they saw a new day (cf. Isa. 65:17; 66:22). With the continued willful rejection of YHWH by the descendants of Abraham (even after the exile) a new paradigm developed in Jewish intertestamental apocalyptic literature (i.e. I Enoch, IV Ezra, II Baruch). These writings begin to distinguish between two ages: a current evil age dominated by Satan and a coming age of righteousness dominated by the Spirit and inaugurated by the Messiah

(often a dynamic warrior).

In this area of theology (eschatology) there is an obvious development. Theologians call this “progressive revelation.” The NT affirms this new cosmic reality of two ages (i.e. a temporal dualism):

<u>Jesus</u>	<u>Paul</u>	<u>Hebrews</u>
Matthew 12:32	Romans 12:2	1:2
Matthew 13:22 & 29	I Cor. 1:20; 2:6,8; 3:18	6:5
	II Cor. 4:4	11:3
	Galatians 1:4	
Mark 10:30	Eph. 1:21; 2:1,7; 6:12	
	I Timothy 6:17	
Luke 16:8	II Timothy 4:10	
Luke 18:30	Titus 2:12	
Luke 20:34-35		

In NT theology these two Jewish ages have been overlapped because of the unexpected and overlooked predictions of the two comings of the Messiah. The incarnation of Jesus fulfilled the OT prophecies of the inauguration of the new age. However, the OT also saw His coming as Judge and Conqueror, yet He came at first as the Suffering Servant (cf. Isa. 53), humble and meek (cf. Zech. 9:9). He will return in power just as the OT predicted (cf. Rev. 19). This two-stage fulfillment caused the Kingdom to be present (inaugurated), but future (not fully consummated). This is the NT tension of the already, but not yet!

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: AGE

### I. Introduction

- A. A quote from a Christian Life Commission on “A Future for the Family,” 1973, p. 16, by L. D. Johnson, entitled “Hebrew-Christian Geriatrics”:

“Our attitude toward the aging, reflected in our behavior as opposed to our sentimental talk, suggests that we recommend the Bible more ardently than obey it.

Probably no society among civilized people demonstrates less concern for the aged than ours. We are youth worshipers. We cater to the young, pamper and overprotect them, indulge them, envy them, and make fools of ourselves trying to imitate them. Our highest value is youth, our lowest age.

Yet the absurdity of such a turned-upside-down value system ought to be obvious. One out of six of us in the western world is over sixty, and the proportion is rising.”

- B. Cultures have differed greatly in how they have treated their aged:

1. Oriental cultures have shown great respect and care for their aged.
2. American Indian culture abandoned their aged to die.

- C. There are some biblical guidelines to help us in this area.

### II. Biblical Material

#### A. Old Testament

1. Age is a divine blessing for a covenant walk.
  - a. Proverbs 16:31
  - b. Genesis 15:15
  - c. Exodus 20:12; Duet. 6:2; 22:6-7; 25:15
  - d. Job 5:17-26 (especially v. 26)
  - e. Psalm 91:14-16
  - f. Psalm 92:1-15 (especially vv. 14-15)
2. Even blessed age has its unique problems
  - a. graphic description of old age is found in Eccl. 12:1-5
  - b. Isaac had poor eyesight, Gen. 27:1
  - c. Jacob had poor eyesight, Gen. 48:10
  - d. Eli had poor eyesight, I Sam. 3:2
  - e. Barzillai had poor hearing and taste, II Sam. 19:31-35
  - f. David had poor circulation, I Kings 1:1-4
  - g. Ahijah had poor eyesight, I Kings 14:1
3. God never leaves us, even in old age.
  - a. Psalm 37:23-26
  - b. Psalm 71:9,18
  - c. Psalm 73:24
4. Age, since it is a sign of God’s blessing, is to be respected.

- a. Leviticus 19:32
- b. Ruth 4:15
- c. Proverbs 23:22
- d. Lack of respect is and will be judged.
  - (1) Deuteronomy 28:50
  - (2) I Samuel 2:31-32
  - (3) Isaiah 3:5
  - (4) Lamentations 4:16; 5:12
- e. Wisdom of Solomon, 2:10
- f. Wisdom of Ben Sirach (Ecclesiasticus) 8:6
- 5. Blessed age brings wisdom and discernment
  - a. I Kings 12:8
  - b. Job 12:12,20
  - c. Job 15:10
  - d. (Ecclesiasticus 25:6)
  - e. There are exceptions
    - (1) Job 32:6ff
    - (2) Ecclesiastes 4:13
- 6. What is considered old age?
  - a. Leviticus 27:1-8, 60 years
  - b. Psalm 90:10, normal - 70, good - 80
  - c. Isaiah 65:20, 100 years
  - d. (Ecclesiasticus 18:9 - 100 years)
- B. New Testament
  - 1. I Timothy
    - a. the widows role, 5:3ff
    - b. attitude toward older persons, 3:1-2
    - c. believers are responsible to their families, 3:8

### III. Some Practical Suggestions

- A. Teach your children to respect older people (you will need this one day yourself!).
- B. Make it a family project to contact aged members of your family. If possible, in person, if not, call or write to older relatives, especially at holiday times.
- C. Take a trip to an aged neighbor or nursing home. Encourage your church to adopt a home and visit it regularly.
- D. Provide time for our younger children to be with grandparents, either natural or “adopted,”
- E. Encourage our churches to develop Senior Adult Ministries. Assign a staff member to coordinate.
- F. Personally begin now to plan and prepare for retirement.

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: BIBLICAL ATTITUDES TOWARD ALCOHOL AND ALCOHOLISM

### I. Biblical Terms

#### A. Old Testament

- 1. *Yayin* - This is the general term for wine, which is used 141 times. The etymology is uncertain because it is not from a Hebrew root. It always means fermented fruit juice, usually grape. Some typical passages are Gen. 9:21; Exod. 29:40; Num. 15:5,10.
- 2. *Tirosh* - This is “new wine.” Because of climatic conditions of the Near East, fermentation started as soon as six hours after extracting the juice. This term refers to wine in the process of fermenting. For some typical passages see Deut. 12:17; 18:4; Isa. 62:8-9; Hos. 4:11.
- 3. *Asis* - This is obviously alcoholic beverages (Joel 1:5; Isa. 49:26).
- 4. *Sekar* - This is the term “strong drink.” The Hebrew root is used in the term “drunk” or “drunkard.” It had something added to it to make it more intoxicating. It is parallel to *yayin* (cf. Prov. 20:1; 31:6; Isa. 28:7).

#### B. New Testament

- 1. *Oinos* - the Greek equivalent of *Yayin*.
- 2. *Neos oinos* (new wine) - the Greek equivalent of *tirosh* (cf. Mark 2:22).
- 3. *Gleuchos vinos* (sweet wine, *asis*) - wine in the early stages of fermentation (cf. Acts 2:13).

### II. Biblical Usage

#### A. Old Testament

- 1. Wine is a gift of God (Gen. 27:28; Ps. 104:14-15; Eccl. 9:7; Hos. 2:8-9; Joel 2:19,24; Amos 9:13; Zech. 10:7).
- 2. Wine is a part of a sacrificial offering (Exod. 29:40; Lev. 23:13; Num. 15:7,10; 28:14; Deut. 14:26; Judg. 9:13).
- 3. Wine is used as medicine (II Sam. 16:2; Prov. 31:6-7).
- 4. Wine can be a real problem (Noah- Gen. 9:21; Lot- Gen. 19:33,35; Samson- Judg. 16:19; Nabal- I Sam. 25:36; Uriah- II Sam. 11:13; Ammon- II Sam. 13:28; Elah- I Kin. 16:9; Benhadad- I Kin. 20:12; Rulers- Amos 6:6; and Ladies- Amos 4).
- 5. Wine can be abused (Prov. 20:1; 23:29-35; 31:4-5; Isa. 5:11,22; 19:14; 28:7-8; Hosea 4:11).



6. Wine was prohibited to certain groups (Priests on duty, Lev. 10:9; Ezek. 44:21; Nazarites, Num. 6; and Rulers, Prov. 31:4-5; Isa. 56:11-12; Hosea 7:5).
  7. Wine is used in an eschatological setting (Amos 9:13; Joel 3:18; Zech. 9:17).
  - B. Interbiblical
    1. Wine in moderation is very helpful (Ecclesiasticus 31:27-30).
    2. The rabbis say, "Wine is the greatest of all medicine, where wine is lacking, then drugs are needed." (BB 58b).
  - C. New Testament
    1. Jesus changed a large quantity of water into wine (John 2:1-11).
    2. Jesus drank wine (Matt. 11:18-19; Luke 7:33-34; 22:17ff).
    3. Peter accused of drunkenness on "new wine" at Pentecost (Acts 2:13).
    4. Wine can be used as medicine (Mark 15:23; Luke 10:34; I Tim. 5:23).
    5. Leaders are not to be abusers. This does not mean total abstainers (I Tim. 3:3,8; Titus 1:7; 2:3; I Pet. 4:3).
    6. Wine used in eschatological settings (Matt. 22:1ff; Rev. 19:9).
    7. Drunkenness is deplored (Matt. 24:49; Luke 11:45; 21:34; I Cor. 5:11-13; 6:10; Gal. 5:21; I Pet. 4:3; Rom. 13:13-14).
- III. Theological Insight
- A. Dialectical tension
    1. Wine is the gift of God.
    2. Drunkenness is a major problem.
    3. Believers in some cultures must limit their freedoms for the sake of the gospel (Matt. 15:1-20; Mark 7:1-23; I Cor. 8-10; Rom. 14).
  - B. Tendency to go beyond given bounds
    1. God is the source of all good things.
    2. Fallen mankind has abused all of God's gifts by taking them beyond God-given bounds.
  - C. Abuse is in us, not in things. There is nothing evil in the physical creation (cf. Mark 7:18-23; Rom. 14:14,20; I Cor. 10:25-26; I Tim. 4:4; Titus 1:15).
- IV. First Century Jewish Culture and Fermentation
- A. Fermentation begins very soon, approximately 6 hours after the grape is crushed.
  - B. Jewish tradition says that when a slight foam appeared on the surface (sign of fermentation), it is liable to the wine-tithe (*Ma aseroth* 1:7). It was called "new wine" or "sweet wine."
  - C. The primary violent fermentation was complete after one week.
  - D. The secondary fermentation took about 40 days. At this state it is considered "aged wine" and could be offered on the altar (*Edhuyyoth* 6:1).
  - E. Wine that had rested on its lees (old wine) was considered good but had to be strained well before use.
  - F. Wine was considered to be properly aged usually after one year of fermentation. Three years was the longest period of time that wine could be safely stored. It was called "old wine" and had to be diluted with water.
  - G. Only in the last 100 years with a sterile environment and chemical additives has fermentation been postponed. The ancient world could not stop the natural process of fermentation.
- V. Closing Statements
- A. Be sure your experience, theology, and biblical interpretation does not depreciate Jesus and first century Jewish/Christian culture! They were obviously not total-abstainers.
  - B. I am not advocating the social use of alcohol. However, many have overstated the Bible's position on this subject and now claim superior righteousness based on a cultural/ denominational bias.
  - C. For me, Romans 14 and I Corinthians 8-10 have provided insight and guidelines based on love and respect for fellow believers and the spread of the gospel in our cultures, not personal freedom or judgmental criticism. If the Bible is the only source for faith and practice, then maybe we must all rethink this issue.

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: ALMSGIVING

- I. The term itself
  - A. This term developed within Judaism (i.e. the Septuagint period).
  - B. It refers to giving to the poor and/or needy.
  - C. The English word, almsgiving, comes from a contraction of the Greek term *eleēmosunē*.
- II. Old Testament concept
  - A. The concept of helping the poor was expressed early in the Torah (writings of Moses, Genesis-Deuteronomy).
    1. typical context, Deut. 15:7-11
    2. "gleaning," leaving part of the harvest for the poor, Lev. 19:9; 23:22; Deut. 24:20
    3. "sabbath year," allowing the poor to eat the produce of the seventh, fallow year, Exod. 23:10-11; Lev. 25:2-7.
  - B. The concept was developed in Wisdom Literature (selected examples)
    1. Job 5:8-16; 29:12-17 (the wicked described in 24:1-12)
    2. the Psalms 11:7
    3. Proverbs 11:4; 14:21,31; 16:6; 21:3,13
- III. Development in Judaism

- A. The first division of the Mishnah deals with how to treat the poor, needy, and local Levites.
- B. Selected quotes
  - 1. Ecclesiasticus (also known as the Wisdom of Ben Sirah) 3:30, “as water extinguishes a blazing fire, so almsgiving atones for sin” (NRSV)
  - 2. Ecclesiasticus 29:12, “store up almsgiving in your treasury and it will rescue you from every disaster” (NRSV)
  - 3. Tobit 4:611, “for those who act in accordance with truth will prosper in all their activities. To all those who practice righteousness<sup>b</sup> <sup>7</sup>give alms from your possessions, and do not let your eye begrudge the gift when you make it. Do not turn your face away from anyone who is poor, and the face of God will not be turned away from you. <sup>8</sup>If you have many possessions, make your gift from them in proportion; if few, do not be afraid to give according to the little you have. <sup>9</sup>So you will be laying up a good treasure for yourself against the day of necessity. <sup>10</sup>For almsgiving delivers from death and keeps you from going into the Darkness. <sup>11</sup>Indeed, almsgiving, for all who practice it, is an excellent offering in the presence of the Most High.” (NRSV)
  - 4. Tobit 12:8-9, “<sup>8</sup>Prayer and fasting<sup>d</sup> is good, but better than both is almsgiving with righteousness. A little with righteousness is better than wealth with wrongdoing<sup>e</sup>. It is better to give alms than to lay up gold. <sup>9</sup>For almsgiving saves from death and purges away every sin. Those who give alms will enjoy a full life.” (NRSV)
- C. The last quote from Tobit 12:8-9 shows the problem developing. Human actions/human merits were seen as the mechanism for both forgiveness and abundance. This concept developed further in the Septuagint where the Greek terms for almsgiving (*eleēmosunē*) became a synonym for righteousness (*dikaïosunē*). They could be substituted for each other in translating the Hebrew terms *hesed* (God’s covenant love and loyalty, cf. Deut. 6:25; 24:13; Isa. 1:27; 28:17; 59:16; Dan. 4:27).
- D. Human acts of compassion became a goal in themselves to achieve one’s personal abundance here and salvation at death. The act itself, instead of the motive behind the act, became theologically preeminent. God looks at the heart, then judges the work of the hand. This was the teaching of the rabbis, but it somehow got lost in the pursuit of individual self righteousness (cf. Micah 6:8).

#### IV. New Testament reaction

- A. The term is found in
  - 1. Matt. 6:1-4
  - 2. Luke 11:41; 12:33
  - 3. Acts 3:2-3,10; 10:2,4,31; 24:17
- B. Jesus addresses the traditional understanding of righteousness as (cf. II Clement 16:4) in His Sermon on the mount (cf. Matt. 5-7).
  - 1. almsgiving
  - 2. fasting
  - 3. prayer

Some Jews were trusting in their actions. These actions were meant to flow out of a love for God, His word and covenant brothers and sisters, not self-interest or self-righteousness! Humility and secrecy become guidelines for proper actions. The heart is crucial. The heart is desperately wicked. God must change the heart. The new heart emulates God!

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: AMEN

### I. OLD TESTAMENT

- A. The term “Amen” is from a Hebrew word for truth (*emeth*) or truthfulness (*emun*, *emunah*) and faith or faithfulness.
- B. Its etymology is from a person’s physical stable stance. The opposite would be one who is unstable, slipping (cf. Deut. 28:64-67; 38:16; Ps. 40:2; 73:18; Jer. 23:12) or stumbling (cf. Ps. 73:2). From this literal usage developed the metaphorical extension of faithful, trustworthy, loyal, and dependable (cf. Gen. 15:16; Hab. 2:4).
- C. Special usages
  - 1. a pillar, II Kgs. 18:16 (I Tim. 3:15)
  - 2. assurance, Exod. 17:12
  - 3. steadiness, Exod. 17:12
  - 4. stability, Isa. 33:6; 34:5-7
  - 5. true, I Kgs. 10:6; 17:24; 22:16; Prov. 12:22
  - 6. firm, II Chr. 20:20; Isa. 7:9
  - 7. reliable (Torah), Ps. 119:43,142,151,168
- D. In the OT two other Hebrew terms are used for active faith.
  - 1. *bathach*, trust
  - 2. *yra*, fear, respect, worship (cf. Gen. 22:12)
- E. From the sense of trust or trustworthiness developed a liturgical usage which was used to affirm a true or trustworthy statement of another (cf. Deut. 27:15-26; Neh. 8:6; Ps. 41:13; 70:19; 89:52; 106:48).
- F. The theological key to this term is not mankind’s faithfulness, but YHWH’s (cf. Exod. 34:6; Duet. 32:4; Ps. 108:4; 115:1; 117:2; 138:2). Fallen humanity’s only hope is the merciful faithful covenant loyalty of YHWH and His promises. Those who know YHWH are to be like Him (cf. Hab. 2:4). The Bible is history and a record of God restoring His image (cf. Gen. 1:26-27)

in mankind. Salvation restores mankind's ability to have intimate fellowship with God. This is why we were created.

## II. NEW TESTAMENT

- A. The use of the word "amen" as a concluding liturgical affirmation of the trustworthiness of a statement is common in the NT (cf. I Cor. 14:16; II Cor. 1:20; Rev. 1:7; 5:14; 7:12).
- B. The use of the term as a close to a prayer is common in the NT (cf. Rom. 1:25; 9:5; 11:36; 16:27; Gal. 1:5; 6:18; Eph. 3:21; Phil. 4:20; II Thess. 3:18; I Tim. 1:17; 6:16; II Tim. 4:18).
- C. Jesus is the only one who used the term (often doubled in John) to introduce significant statements (cf. Luke 4:24; 12:37; 18:17,29; 21:32; 23:43)
- D. It is used as a title for Jesus in Rev. 3:14 (possibly a title of YHWH from Isa. 65:16).
- E. The concept of faithfulness or faith, trustworthiness, or trust is expressed in the Greek term *pistos* or *pistis*, which is translated into English as trust, faith, believe.

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: ANGELS IN PAUL'S WRITINGS

The rabbis thought that the angels were jealous of God's love and attention to fallen mankind and, therefore, were hostile to them. The Gnostic false teachers asserted that salvation was only available by secret passwords through hostile angelic spheres (cf. Col. and Eph.), which led up to the high-god.

George Eldon Ladd has a good summary of the terms used by Paul for angels in his book *A Theology of the New Testament*:

"Paul refers not only to good and bad angels, to Satan and to demons; he uses another group of words to designate ranks of angelic spirits.

The terminology is as follows:

- 'Rule' [*arche*], I Cor. 15:24; Eph. 1:21; Col. 2:10
- 'Rules' [*archai*; RSV, "principalities"], Eph. 3:10; 6:12; Col. 1:16; 2:15; Rom. 8:38
- 'Authority' [*exousia*], I Cor. 15:24; Eph. 1:21; Col. 2:10
- 'Authorities' [*exousiai*; RSV, "authorities"], Eph. 1:21
- 'Power' [*dynamis*], I Cor. 15:24; Eph. 1:21
- 'Powers' [*dynameis*], Rom. 8:38
- 'Thrones' [*thronoi*], Col. 1:16
- 'Lordship' [*kyriotes*; RSV, "dominion"], Eph. 1:21
- 'Lordships' [*kyriotetes*], Col. 1:16
- 'World rulers of this darkness,' Eph. 6:12
- 'The spiritual (hosts) of evil in the heavenlies,' Eph. 6:12
- 'The authority of darkness,' Col. 1:13
- 'Every name that is named,' Eph. 1:21
- 'Heavenly, earthly, and subterranean beings,' Phil. 2:10", (p. 401).

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: ANOINTING IN THE BIBLE

- A. Used for beautification (cf. Deut. 28:40; Ruth 3:3; II Sam. 12:20; 14:2; II Chr. 28:1-5; Dan. 10:3; Amos 6:6; Mic. 6:15)
- B. Used for guests (cf. Ps. 23:5; Luke 7:38,46; John 11:2)
- C. Used for healing (cf. Isa. 6:1; Jer. 51:8; Mark 6:13; Luke 10:34; James 5:14) [used in hygienic sense in Ezek. 16:9]
- D. Used for preparation for burial (cf. Gen. 50:2; II Chr. 16:14; Mark 16:1; John 12:3,7; 19:39-40)
- E. Used in a religious sense (of an object, cf. Gen. 28:18,20; 31:13 [a pillar]; Exod. 29:36 [the altar]; Exod. 30:36; 40:9-16; Lev. 8:10-13; Num. 7:1 [the tabernacle])
- F. Used for installing leaders
  - 1. Priests
    - a. Exod. 28:41; 29:7; 30:30 (Aaron)
    - b. Exod. 40:15; Lev. 7:36 (Aaron's sons)
    - c. Num. 3:3; Lev. 16:32 (standard phrase or title)
  - 2. Kings
    - a. by God (cf. I Sam. 2:10; II Sam. 12:7; II Kgs. 9:3,6,12; Ps. 45:7; 89:20)
    - b. by the prophets (cf. I Sam. 9:16; 10:1; 15:1,17; 16:3,12-13; I Kgs. 1:45; 19:15-16)
    - c. by priests (cf. I Kgs. 1:34,39; II Kgs. 11:12)
    - d. by the elders (cf. Jdgs. 9:8,15; II Sam. 2:7; 5:3; II Kgs. 23:30)
    - e. of Jesus as Messianic king (cf. Ps. 2:2; Luke 4:18 [Isa. 61:1]; Acts 4:27; 10:38; Heb. 1:9 [Ps. 45:7])
    - f. Jesus' followers (cf. II Cor. 1:21; I John 2:20,27 [*chrisma*])
  - 3. possibly of prophets (cf. Isa. 61:1)

4. unbelieving instruments of divine deliverance
  - a. Cyrus (cf. Isa. 45:1)
  - b. King of Tyre (cf. Ezek. 28:14)

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## **SPECIAL TOPIC: THE ANY-MOMENT RETURN OF JESUS VS. THE NOT YET (NT PARADOX)**

- A. New Testament eschatological passages reflect Old Testament prophetic insight that viewed the end-time through contemporary occurrences.
- B. Matt. 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21 are so difficult to interpret because they deal with several questions simultaneously.
  1. when will the Temple be destroyed
  2. what will be the sign of the Messiah's return
  3. when will this age end (cf. Matt. 24:3)?
- C. The genre of New Testament eschatological passages is usually a combination of apocalyptic and prophetic language which is purposely ambiguous and highly symbolic.
- D. Several passages in the NT (cf. Matt. 24, Mark 13, Luke 17 and 21, I and II Thess. and Rev.) deal with the Second Coming. These passages emphasize:
  1. the exact time of the event is unknown, but the event is certain
  2. we can know the general time, but not specific time of the events
  3. it will occur suddenly and unexpectedly
  4. we must be prayerful, ready, and faithful to assigned tasks.
- E. There is a theological paradoxical tension between (1) the any-moment return (cf. Luke 12:40,46; 21:36; Matt.24:27,44) versus (2) the fact that some events in history must occur.
- F. The NT states that some events will occur before the Second Coming.
  1. The Gospel preached to the whole world (cf. Matt. 24:14; Mark 13:10)
  2. The great apostasy (cf. Matt. 24:10-13, 21; I Tim. 4:1; II Tim. 3:1ff.; II Thess. 2:3)
  3. The revelation of the "man of sin" (cf. Dan. 7:23-26; 9:24-27; II Thess. 2:3)
  4. Removal of that/who restrains (cf. II Thess. 2:6-7)
  5. Jewish revival (cf. Zech. 12:10; Rom. 11)
- G. Luke 17:26-37 is not paralleled in Mark. It does have a partial Synoptic parallel in Matt. 24:37-44.

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## **SPECIAL TOPIC: APOCALYPTIC LITERATURE**

(This special topic is taken from my commentary on Revelation.)

Revelation is a uniquely Jewish literary genre, apocalyptic. It was often used in tension-filled times to express the conviction that God was in control of history and would bring deliverance to His people. This type of literature is characterized by

1. a strong sense of the universal sovereignty of God (monotheism and determinism)
2. a struggle between good and evil, this age and the age to come (dualism)
3. use of secret code words (usually from the OT or intertestamental Jewish apocalyptic literature)
4. use of colors, numbers, animals, sometimes animals/humans
5. use of angelic mediation by means of visions and dreams, but usually through angelic mediation
6. primarily focuses on the end-time (new age)
7. use of a fixed set of symbols, not reality, to communicate the end-time message
8. Some examples of this type of genre are:
  - a. Old Testament
    - (1) Isaiah 24-27, 56-66
    - (2) Ezekiel 37-48
    - (3) Daniel 7-12
    - (4) Joel 2:28-3:21
    - (5) Zechariah 1-6, 12-14
  - b. New Testament
    - (1) Matthew 24, Mark 13, Luke 21, and I Corinthians 15 (in some ways)
    - (2) II Thessalonians 2 (in most ways)
    - (3) Revelation (chapters 4-22)
9. non-canonical (taken from D. S. Russell, *The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic*, pp. 37-38)
  - a. I Enoch, II Enoch (the Secrets of Enoch)

- b. The Book of Jubilees
- c. The Sibylline Oracles III, IV, V
- d. The Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs
- e. The Psalms of Solomon
- f. The Assumption of Moses
- g. The Martyrdom of Isaiah
- h. The Apocalypse of Moses (Life of Adam and Eve)
- i. The Apocalypse of Abraham
- j. The Testament of Abraham
- k. II Esdras (IV Esdras)
- l. Baruch II, III

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: APOSTASY (*APHISTĒMI*)

This Greek term *aphistēmi* has a wide semantic field. However, the English term “apostasy” is derived from this term and prejudices its usage to modern readers. Context, as always, is the key, not a preset definition.

This is a compound term from the preposition *apo*, which means “from” or “away from” and *histēmi*, “to sit,” “to stand,” or “to fix.” Notice the following (non-theological) usages:

1. to remove physically
  - a. from the Temple, Luke 2:37
  - b. from a house, Mark 13:34
  - c. from a person, Mark 12:12; 14:50; Acts 5:38
  - d. from all things, Matt. 19:27,29
2. to remove politically, Acts 5:37
3. to remove relationally, Acts 5:38; 15:38; 19:9; 22:29
4. to remove legally (divorce), Deut. 24:1,3 (LXX ) and NT, Matt. 5:31; 19:7; Mark 10:4; I Cor. 7:11
5. to remove a debt, Matt. 18:24
6. to show unconcern by leaving, Matt. 4:20; 22:27; John 4:28; 16:32
7. to show concern by not leaving, John 8:29; 14:18
8. to allow or permit, Matt. 13:30; 19:14; Mark 14:6; Luke 13:8

In a theological sense the verb also has a wide usage:

1. to cancel, pardon, remit the guilt of sin, Exod.32:32 (LXX); Num. 14:19; Job 42:10 and NT, Matt. 6:12,14-15; Mark 11:25-26
2. to refrain from sin, II Tim. 2:19
3. to neglect by moving away from
  - a. the Law, Matt. 23:23; Acts 21:21
  - b. the faith, Ezek. 20:8 (LXX ); Luke 8:13; II Thess. 2:3; I Tim. 4:1; Heb. 2:13

Modern believers ask many theological questions that the NT writers would have never thought about. One of these would relate to the modern tendency to separate faith from faithfulness.

There are persons in the Bible who are involved in the people of God and something happens.

### I. Old Testament

- A. Korah, Num. 16
- B. Eli’s sons, I Sam. 2, 4
- C. Saul, I Sam. 11-31
- D. False prophets (examples)
  1. Deut. 13:1-5 18:19-22
  2. Jeremiah 28
  3. Ezekiel 13:1-7
- E. False prophetesses
  1. Ezekiel 13:17
  2. Nehemiah 6:14
- F. Evil leaders of Israel (examples)
  1. Jeremiah 5:30-31; 8:1-2; 23:1-4
  2. Ezekiel 22:23-31
  3. Micah 3:5-12

### II. New Testament

- A. This Greek term is literally *apostasize*. The Old and New Testaments both confirm an intensification of evil and false teaching before the Second Coming (cf. Matt. 24:24; Mark 13:22; Acts 20:29,30; II Thess. 2:9-12; II Tim. 4:4). This Greek term may reflect Jesus’ words in the Parable of the Soils found in Luke 8:13. These false teachers are obviously not Christians, but they came from within (cf. Acts 20:29-30; I John 2:19); however, they are able to seduce and capture true, but immature, believers (cf. Heb. 3:12).

The theological question is were the false teachers ever believers? This is difficult to answer because there were false teachers in the local

churches (cf. I John 2:18-19). Often our theological or denominational traditions answer this question without reference to specific Bible texts (except the proof-text method of quoting a verse out of context to supposedly prove one's bias).

B. Apparent faith

1. Judas, John 17:12
2. Simon Magnus, Acts 8
3. Those spoken of in Matt. 7:21-23
4. Those spoken of in Matt. 13
5. Alexander and Hymenaeus, I Tim. 1:19-20
6. Hymenaeus and Philetus, II Tim. 2:16-18
7. Demas, II Tim. 4:10
8. False teachers, II Peter 2:19-20; Jude 12-19
9. antichrists, I John 2:18-19

C. Fruitless faith

1. Matthew 7
2. I Corinthians 3:10-15
3. II Peter 1:8-11

We rarely think about these texts because our systematic theology (Calvinism, Arminianism, etc. dictates the mandated response. Please do not pre-judge me because I bring up this subject. My concern is proper hermeneutical procedure. We must let the Bible speak to us and not try to mold it into a preset theology. This is often painful and shocking because much of our theology is denominational, cultural or relational (parent, friend, pastor), not biblical. Some who are in the People of God turn out to not be in the People of God (e.g. Rom. 9:6).

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## CHART OF APOSTLES' NAMES

	Matthew 10:2-4	Mark 3:16-19	Luke 6:14-16	Acts 1:12-18
First Group	Simon (Peter) Andrew (Peter's brother) James (son of Zebedee) John (James' brother)	Simon (Peter) James (son of Zebedee) John (James' brother) Andrew	Simon (Peter) Andrew (Peter's brother) James John	Peter John James Andrew
Second Group	Philip Bartholomew Thomas Matthew (tax gatherer)	Philip Bartholomew Matthew Thomas	Philip Bartholomew Matthew Thomas	Philip Thomas Bartholomew Matthew
Third Group	James (son of Alphaeus) Thaddaeus Simon (the Cananean) Judas (Ischariot)	James (son of Alphaeus) Thaddaeus Simon (the Cananean) Judas (Ischariot)	James (son of Alphaeus) Simon (the zealot) Judas (son of James) Judas (Ischariot)	James (son of Alphaeus) Simon (the zealot) Judas (son of James)

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: THE ARK OF THE COVENANT

I. Its purpose

- A. the place where YHWH dwelt with His people, between the wings of the cherubim
- B. the place of forgiveness of sin, for all peoples (cf. Israel, Lev. 16 and I Kgs. 8:30-30; foreigners, 8:41,43,60)

II. Its contents

A. rabbinical tradition

1. the two tablets of stone on which YHWH wrote the decalog (cf. Exod. 31:18; 32:15-16)
2. the two silver columns which hold the tablets (no biblical references)
3. the fragments of the original two tablets which were broken by Moses because of Israel's (Aaron) making and worshipping the golden calf (cf. Exod. 32:19; Deut. 9:17; 10:2)
4. a copy of the entire Torah (cf. Exod. 25:16)
5. the names of God (cf. I Kgs. 8:29) developed in *Kabalah*, Jewish mysticism

B. biblical references as to the contents (uncertain if these refer to things inside the ark or beside it)

1. a jar of manna (cf. Exod. 16:31-36)



2. Aaron's rod that budded (cf. Num. 17:4,10; Heb. 9:4)
  3. the guilt offerings of the Philistines (5 golden mice and golden hemorrhoids, cf. I Sam. 6:3-4,8)
  4. a copy of the Decalog (cf. Deut. 10:4-5; 31:26)
  - C. at the dedication of Solomon's Temple in I Kgs. 8 the ark is said to have only contained the Torah (cf. 8:9)
- III. Its possible location
- A. Historical options
    1. taken to Egypt by Shishak (935-914 B.C.) when he invaded Judah in the fifth year (926) of Rehoboam's (son of Solomon) reign (cf. I Kgs. 14:25-26; I Chr. 12:9).
    2. taken to Egypt (Zoan, Tanis, Avaris—different names for the delta capital of Seti I) by Pharaoh Necco II, who also exiled the Davidic seed Jehoahaz (Josiah's son) in 597 B.C. (cf. II Kgs.23:31-35; II Chr. 36:1-4)
    3. taken to Babylon to the temple of Marduk by Nebuchadnezzar II when Zedekiah was exiled (586 B.C.) and the Temple burned (cf. II Kgs. 25:9,13-17; II Chr. 36:18).
  - B. Jewish traditions
    1. hidden on Mt. Nebo/Pisgah by Jeremiah before the fall of Jerusalem
    2. the apocryphal book of II Baruch says an angel hid it
    3. hidden by unknown means, but will be returned by Elijah just before the Messiah comes (cf. Mal. 4:5)
    4. hidden on Mt. Gerizim (Shechem) where the Samaritans built their temple to YHWH

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: PREDESTINATION (CALVINISM) VS. HUMAN FREE WILL (ARMINIANISM)

This passage is a balance to other NT passages on election. I thought it might be theologically helpful to provide my commentary notes from Rom. 8:29 and 9, as well as Eph. 1.

- I. Romans 8:29 - Paul uses "foreknew" (*proginōskō*, "to know before") twice, here and 11:2. In 11:2 it refers to God's covenant love for Israel before time began. Remember that the term "know" in Hebrew related to intimate, personal relationship, not to facts about someone (cf. Gen. 4:1; Jer. 1:5). Here it was included in a chain of eternal events (cf. Rom. 8:29-30). This term was linked with predestination. However, it must be stated that God's foreknowledge is not the basis of election because if that were so, then election would be based on fallen humanity's future response, which would be human performance. This term is also found in Acts 26:5; I Pet. 1:2,20 and II Pet. 3:17.

- A. "foreknew" (*proginōskō*, "to know before")

The terms "foreknow" or "predestine" are both compounds with the preposition "before" and therefore, should be translated "to know before," "to set bounds before," or "mark off before." The definitive passages on predestination in the NT are Rom. 8:28-30; Eph. 1:13-14; and Rom. 9.

These texts obviously stress that God is sovereign. He is in total control of all things. There is a preset divine plan being worked out in time. However, this plan is not arbitrary or selective. It is based not only on God's sovereignty and foreknowledge, but on His unchanging character of love, mercy, and undeserved grace.

We must be careful of our western (American) individualism or our evangelical zeal coloring this wonderful truth. We must also guard against being polarized into the historical, theological conflicts between Augustine versus Pelagius or Calvinism versus Arminianism.

- B. "predestined" (*proorizō*, "to set the bounds before")

Predestination is not a doctrine meant to limit God's love, grace, and mercy nor to exclude some from the gospel. It is meant to strengthen believers by molding their world-view. God is for all

mankind (cf. I Tim. 2:4; II Pet. 3:9). God is in control of all things. Who or what can separate us from Him (cf. Rom. 8:31-39)? God views all history as present. Humans are time bound. Our perspective and mental abilities are limited. There is no contradiction between God's sovereignty and mankind's free will. It is a covenantal structure. This is another example of truth given in dialectical tension. Biblical doctrines are presented from different perspectives. They often appear paradoxical. The truth is a balance between the seemingly opposite pairs. We must not remove the tension by picking one of the truths. We must not isolate any biblical truth into a compartment by itself.

It is also important to add that the goal of election is not only heaven when we die, but Christlikeness now (cf. Rom. 8:29; Eph. 1:4; 2:10). We were chosen to be "holy and blameless." God chooses to change us so that others may see the change and respond by faith to God in Christ. Predestination is not a personal privilege, but a covenantal responsibility. This is the major truth of the passage. This is the goal of Christianity. Holiness is God's will for every believer. God's election is to Christlikeness (cf. Eph. 1:4), not a special standing. The image of God, which was given to man in creation (cf. Gen. 1:26; 5:1,3; 9:6), is to be restored.

- C. "conformed to the image of His Son"—God's ultimate goal is the restoration of the image lost in the Fall. Believers are foreordained to Christlikeness (cf. Eph. 1:4).

## II. Romans 9

- A. Chapter 9 is one of the strongest NT passages on God's sovereignty (the other being, Eph. 1:3-14), while Romans 10 states humans' free will clearly and repeatedly (cf. "everyone" v. 4; "whosoever" vv. 11,13; "all" v. 12 [twice]). Paul never tries to reconcile this theological tension. They are both true! Most Bible doctrines are presented in paradoxical or dialectical pairs. Most systems of theology are logical half-truths. Augustinianism and Calvinism versus semi-Pelagianism and Arminianism have elements of truth and error. Biblical tension between doctrines is preferable to a proof-texted, dogmatic, rational, theological system that forces the Bible onto a preconceived interpretive grid.

- B. This same truth (found in Rom. 9:23) is stated in Rom. 8:29-30 and Eph. 1:4,11. This chapter is the strongest expression of God's sovereignty in the NT. There can be no dispute that God is in total charge of creation and redemption. This great truth should never be softened or diminished.

However, it must be balanced with God's choice of covenant as a means of relating to human creation, made in His image. It is surely true

that some OT covenants, like Gen. 15, are unconditional and do not relate at all to human response, but other covenants are conditioned on human response (e.g. Eden, Noah, Moses, David). God has a plan of redemption for His creation; no human can affect this plan. God has chosen to allow individuals to participate in His plans. This opportunity for participation is a theological tension between sovereignty (Rom. 9) and human free will (Rom. 10). It is not appropriate to select one biblical emphasis and ignore another. There is tension between doctrines because eastern people present truth in dialectical or tension-filled pairs. Doctrines must be held in relationship to other doctrines. Truth is a mosaic of truths.

### III. Ephesians 1

- A. Election is a wonderful doctrine. However, it is not a call to favoritism, but a call to be a channel, a tool or means of others' redemption! In the OT the term was used primarily for service; in the NT it is used primarily for salvation which issues in service. The Bible never reconciles the seeming contradiction between God's sovereignty and mankind's free will, but affirms them both! A good example of the biblical tension would be Romans 9 on God's sovereign choice and Romans 10 on mankind's necessary response (cf. 10:11,13). The key to this theological tension may be found in 1:4. Jesus is God's elect man and all are potentially elect in Him (Karl Barth). Jesus is God's "yes" to fallen mankind's need (Karl Barth). Ephesians 1:4 also helps clarify the issue by asserting that the goal of predestination is not heaven only, but holiness (Christlikeness). We are often attracted to the benefits of the gospel and ignore the responsibilities! God's call (election) is for time as well as eternity! Doctrines come in relation to other truths, not as single, unrelated truths. A good analogy would be a constellation versus a single star. God presents truth in eastern, not western, genres. We must not remove the tension caused by dialectical (paradoxical) pairs of doctrinal truths (God as transcendent versus God as immanent; security vs. perseverance; Jesus as equal with the Father vs. Jesus as subservient to the Father; Christian freedom vs. Christian responsibility to a covenant partner, etc).
- The theological concept of "covenant" unites the sovereignty of God (who always takes the initiative and sets the agenda) with a mandatory initial and continuing repentant, faith response from man. Be careful of proof-texting one side of the paradox and depreciating the other! Be careful of asserting only your favorite doctrine or system of theology.
- B. "He chose us" in Eph. 1:4 is an AORIST MIDDLE INDICATIVE which emphasizes the subject. This focuses on the Father's choice before time. God's choice must not be understood in the Islamic sense of determinism, nor in the ultra-Calvinistic sense as some versus others, but in the covenantal sense. God promised to redeem fallen mankind (cf. Gen. 3:15). God called and chose Abraham to choose all humans (cf. Gen. 12:3; Exod. 19:5-6). God Himself elected all persons who would exercise faith in Christ. God always takes the initiative in salvation (cf. John 6:44,65). This text and Rom. 9 are the biblical basis for the doctrine of predestination emphasized by Augustine and Calvin. God chose believers not only to salvation (justification), but also to sanctification (cf. Col 1:12). This could relate to (1) our position in Christ (cf. II Cor. 5:21) or (2) God's desire to reproduce His character in His children (cf. 2:10; Rom. 8:28-29; Gal. 4:19). God's will for His children is both heaven one day and Christlikeness now! "In Him" is a key concept of Eph. 1:4. The Father's blessings, grace, and salvation flow through Christ (cf. John 14:6). Notice the repetition of this grammatical form (LOCATIVE of sphere) in v. 3, "in Christ"; vs. 4, "in Him"; v. 7, "in Him"; v. 9, "in Him"; v. 10, "in Christ," "in Him"; v. 12, "in Christ" and v. 13, "in Him" (twice). Jesus is God's "yes" to fallen mankind (Karl Barth). Jesus is the elect man and all are potentially elect in Him. All of God the Father's blessings flow through Christ. The phrase "before the foundation of the world" is also used in Matt. 25:34; John 17:24; I Pet. 1:19-20 and Rev. 13:8. It shows the Triune God's redemptive activity even before Gen. 1:1. Humans are limited by their sense of time; everything to us is past, present and future, but not to God. The goal of predestination is holiness, not privilege. God's call is not to a selected few of Adam's children, but to all! It is a call to be what God intended mankind to be, like Himself (cf. I Thess. 5:23; II Thess. 2:13); in His image (cf. Gen. 1:26-27). To turn predestination into a theological tenet instead of a holy life is a tragedy. Often our theologies speak louder than the biblical text. The term "blameless" (*amōmos*) or "free from blemish" is used of (1) Jesus (cf. Heb. 9:14; I Pet. 1:19); (2) Zachariah and Elizabeth (cf. Luke 1:6); (3) Paul (cf. Phil. 3:6); and (4) all true Christians (cf. Phil. 2:15; I Thess. 3:13; 5:23). God's unalterable will for every Christian is not only heaven later, but Christlikeness now (cf. Rom. 8:29-30; Gal. 4:19; I Pet. 1:2). Believers are to reflect God's characteristics to a lost world for the purpose of evangelism. Grammatically the phrase "in love" in this verse could go with either v. 4 or v. 5. However, when this phrase is used in other places in Ephesians it always refers to human love for God (cf. 3:17; 4:2,15,16).
- C. In Eph. 1:5 the phrase "He predestined us" is an AORIST ACTIVE PARTICIPLE. This Greek term is a compound of "before" and "mark off." It refers to God's predetermined redemptive plan (cf. Luke 22:22; Acts 2:23; 4:28; 17:31; Rom. 8:29-30). Predestination is one of several truths related to mankind's salvation. It is part of a theological pattern or series of related truths. It was never meant to be emphasized in isolation! Biblical truth has been given in a series of tension-filled, paradoxical pairs. Denominationalism has tended to remove the biblical tension by emphasizing only one of the dialectical truths (predestination vs. human free will; security of the believer vs. perseverance of the saints; original sin vs. volitional sin; sinlessness vs. sinning less; instantaneously declared sanctification vs. progressive sanctification; faith vs. works; Christian freedom vs. Christian responsibility; transcendence vs. immanence). God's choice is not based on foreknowledge of human performance, but on His gracious character (cf. vv. 9 & 11). He wishes that all (not just some special ones like the Gnostics or modern-day ultra-Calvinists) would be saved (cf. Ezek. 18:21-23,32; John 3:16-17; I Tim. 2:4; 4:10; Titus 2:11; II Pet. 3:9). God's grace (God's character) is the theological key to this passage (cf. vv. 6a, 7c, 9b), as God's mercy is the key to the other passage on predestination, Rom. 9-11. Fallen mankind's only hope is the grace and mercy of God (cf. Isa. 53:6 and several other OT texts quoted in Rom. 3:9-18). It is crucial in interpreting these first theological chapters to realize that Paul emphasizes those things which are totally unrelated to human performance: predestination (chap. 1), grace (chap. 2), and God's eternal plan of redemption (mystery, 2:11- 3:13). This was to counterbalance the emphasis of the false teachers on human merit and pride.



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## SPECIAL TOPIC: ASSURANCE

- A. Can Christians know they are saved (cf. 5:13)? I John has three tests or evidences:
  - 1. Doctrinal (belief) (vv. 1,5,10; 2:18-25; 4:1-6,14-16; 5:11-12)
  - 2. Lifestyle (obedience) (vv. 2-3; 2:3-6; 3:1-10; 5:18)
  - 3. Social (love) (vv. 2-3; 2:7-11; 3:11-18; 4:7-12, 16-21)
- B. Assurance has become a denominational issue
  - 1. John Calvin based assurance on God's election. He said that we can never be certain in this life.
  - 2. John Wesley based assurance on religious experience. He believed that we have the ability to live above known sin.
  - 3. Roman Catholics and the Church of Christ base assurance on an authoritative Church. The group to which one belongs is the key to assurance.
  - 4. Most evangelicals base assurance on the promises of the Bible, linked to the fruit of the Spirit in the life of the believer (cf. Gal. 5:22-23).
- C. I think fallen mankind's primary assurance is linked to the character of the Triune God
  - 1. God the Father's love
    - a. John 3:16; 10:28-29
    - b. Romans 8:31-39
    - c. Ephesians 2:5,8-9
    - d. Philippians 1:6
    - e. I Peter 1:3-5
    - f. I John 4:7-21
  - 2. God the Son's actions
    - a. death on our behalf
      - 1) Acts 2:23
      - 2) Romans 5:6-11
      - 3) II Corinthians 5:21
      - 4) I John 2:2; 4:9-10
    - b. high priestly prayer (John 17:12)
    - c. continuing intercession
      - 1) Romans 8:34
      - 2) Hebrews 7:25
      - 3) I John 2:1
  - 3. God the Spirit's ministry
    - a. calling (John 6:44,65)
    - b. sealing
      - 1) II Corinthians 1:22; 5:5
      - 2) Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:3
    - c. assuring
      - 1) Romans 8:16-17
      - 2) I John 5:7-13
- D. But humans must respond to God's covenant offer (both initially and continually)
  - 1. believers must turn from sin (repentance) and to God through Jesus (faith)
    - a. Mark 1:15
    - b. Acts 3:16,19; 20:21
  - 2. believers must receive God's offer in Christ
    - a. John 1:12; 3:16
    - b. Romans 5:1 (and by analogy 10:9-13)
    - c. Ephesians 2:5,8-9
  - 3. believers must continue in the faith
    - a. Mark 13:13
    - b. I Corinthians 15:2
    - c. Galatians 6:9
    - d. Hebrews 3:14
    - e. II Peter 1:10
    - f. Jude 20-21
    - g. Revelation 2:2-3,7,10,17,19,25-26; 3:5,10,11,21
  - 4. believers face three tests
    - a. doctrinal (vv. 1,5,10; 2:18-25; 4:1-6,14-16)
    - b. lifestyle (vv. 2-3; 2:3-6; 3:1-10)
    - c. social (vv. 2-3; 2:7-11; 3:11-18; 4:7-12, 16-21)
- D. Assurance is difficult because

1. often believers seek certain experiences not promised in the Bible
2. often believers do not fully understand the gospel
3. often believers continue to willfully sin (cf. I Cor. 3:10-15; 9:27; I Tim. 1:19-20; II Tim. 4:10; II Pet. 1:8-11)
4. certain personality types (i.e. perfectionists) can never accept God's unconditional acceptance and love
5. in the Bible there are examples of false professions (cf. Matt. 13:3-23; 7:21-23; Mark 4:14-20; II Pet. 2:19-20; I John 2:18-19)

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## **SPECIAL TOPIC: AUTHORITY (*EXOUSIA*)**

It is interesting in observing Luke's use of *exousia* (authority, power, or legal right).

1. In 4:6 Satan claims to be able to give Jesus authority.
2. In 4:32,36 the Jewish people were amazed at how Jesus taught using His personal authority.
3. In 9:1 He gave His power and authority to His Apostles.
4. In 10:19 He gave His authority to the seventy missionaries.
5. In 20:2,8 the central question of Jesus' authority is asked.
6. In 22:53 evil has been allowed authority to condemn and kill Jesus.

Although not in Luke, Matthew's introduction to the Great Commission is a marvelous statement, "all authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth" (Matt. 28:18).

Jesus' answer to their question would have been

1. God's spoken words at His
  - a. baptism (Luke 3:21-22)
  - b. transfiguration (Luke 9:35)
2. OT fulfilled prophecy
  - a. tribe of Judah (cf. Gen. 49:10)
  - b. family of Jesse (cf. II Sam.7)
  - c. born in Bethlehem (cf. Micah 5:2)
  - d. born during the fourth empire (Rome) of Dan. 2
  - e. helped the poor, blind, needy (Isaiah)
3. His exorcisms revealed His power and authority over Satan and his kingdom.
4. His resuscitations of the dead showed His power over physical life and death.
5. His miracles all reveal His power and authority over the temporal, spacial, and physical.
  - a. nature
  - b. feedings
  - c. healings
  - d. mind readings
  - e. catching fish

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## **SPECIAL TOPIC: BARNABAS**

### **I. The Man**

- A. born in Cyprus (cf. Acts 4:36)
- B. of the tribe of Levi (cf. Acts 4:36)
- C. nicknamed "son of encouragement" (cf. Acts 4:36; 11:23)
- D. a member of the Jerusalem church (cf. Acts 11:22)
- E. he had the spiritual gifts of a prophet and teacher (cf. Acts 13:1)
- F. called an apostle (cf. Acts 14:14)

### **II. His Ministry**

- A. in Jerusalem
  1. sold his property and gave all the money to the Apostles to help the poor (cf. Acts 4:37)
  2. leader in the Jerusalem church (cf. Acts 11:22)
- B. with Paul
  1. He was one of the first to trust Paul's conversion (cf. Acts 11:24).
  2. He went to Tarsus find Paul and get him to help with the new church in Antioch (cf. Acts 11:24-26).
  3. The church at Antioch sent Barnabas and Saul to the church in Jerusalem with a contribution for the poor (cf. Acts 11:29-30).
  4. Barnabas and Paul go on the first missionary journey (cf. Acts 13:1-3)
  5. Barnabas was the team leader on Cyprus (his home island), but soon Paul's leadership was recognized (cf. Acts 13:13)

6. They reported to the church in Jerusalem to explain and document their mission work among the Gentiles (cf. Acts 15, called the Jerusalem Council).
7. Barnabas and Paul had their first disagreement about Jewish food laws and Gentile fellowship recorded in Gal. 2:11-14.
8. Barnabas and Paul planned a second missionary journey, but a dispute broke out over Barnabas' cousin, John Mark (cf. Col. 4:10), who deserted the work on the first mission trip (cf. Acts 13:13). Paul refused to take him on the second mission trip, so the team broke up (cf. Acts 15:36-41). This resulted in two teams (i.e. Barnabas and John Mark and Paul and Silas).

### III. Church Tradition (Eusebius)

- A. Barnabas was one of the seventy sent out by Jesus (cf. Luke 10:1-20).
- B. He died as a Christian martyr on his home island, Cyprus.
- C. Tertullian says he wrote the book of Hebrews.
- D. Clement of Alexandria says he wrote the non-canonical book of the Epistle of Barnabas.

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: BELIEF, FAITH, TRUST

The gospel is for all humans, but believing is one of the conditions for acceptance. The other is repentance (cf. Mark 1:15; Acts 3:16,19; 20:21). God deals with mankind by means of covenant. He always takes the initiative and sets the agenda. There are, however, several reciprocal conditions. See note at 1:5.

The Greek term, here translated "believe," can also be translated in English by the terms "faith" or "trust." The Greek word has a wider connotation than any one English word. Saving faith is continuing faith (cf. I Cor. 1:18; 15:2; I Cor. 2:15; I Thess. 4:14).

Originally the related Hebrew terms behind this Greek term for "faith" meant a stable stance, a man with his feet apart so that he could not be easily moved. The opposite OT metaphor would be "my feet were in the miry clay" (Ps. 40:2), "my feet almost slipped" (Ps. 73:2). These Hebrew related roots, *emun*, *emunah*, *aman*, came to be used metaphorically of someone who was trustworthy, loyal, or dependable. Saving faith does not reflect fallen mankind's ability to be faithful, but God's! Believers' hopes do not reside in their abilities, but in God's character and promises. It is His trustworthiness, His faithfulness, His promises!

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: FAITH (*PISTIS* [noun], *PISTEUŌ*, [verb], *PISTOS* [adjective])

- A. This is such an important term in the Bible (cf. Heb. 11:1,6). It is the subject of Jesus' early preaching (cf. Mark 1:15). There are at least two new covenant requirements: repentance and faith (cf. 1:15; Acts 3:16,19; 20:21).
- B. Its etymology
  1. The term "faith" in the OT meant loyalty, fidelity, or trustworthiness and was a description of God's nature, not ours.
  2. It came from a Hebrew term (*emun*, *emunah*), which meant "to be sure or stable." Saving faith is mental assent (set of truths), moral living (a lifestyle), and primarily a relational (welcoming of a person) and volitional commitment (a decision) to that person.
- C. Its OT usage
 

It must be emphasized that Abraham's faith was not in a future Messiah, but in God's promise that he would have a child and descendants (cf. Gen. 12:2; 15:2-5; 17:4-8; 18:14). Abraham responded to this promise by trusting in God. He still had doubts and problems about this promise, which took thirteen years to be fulfilled. His imperfect faith, however, was accepted by God. God is willing to work with flawed human beings who respond to Him and His promises in faith, even if it is the size of a mustard seed (cf. Matt. 17:20).
- D. Its NT usage
 

The term "believed" is from the Greek term (*pisteuō*) which can also be translated "believe," "faith," or "trust." For example, the noun does not occur in the Gospel of John, but the verb is used often. In John 2:23-25 there is uncertainty as to the genuineness of the crowd's commitment to Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah. Other examples of this superficial use of the term "believe" are in John 8:31-59 and Acts 8:13, 18-24. True biblical faith is more than an initial response. It must be followed by a process of discipleship (cf. Matt. 13:20-22,31-32).
- E. Its use with PREPOSITIONS
  1. *eis* means "into." This unique construction emphasizes believers putting their trust/faith in Jesus
    - a. into His name (John 1:12; 2:23; 3:18; I John 5:13)
    - b. into Him (John 2:11; 3:15,18; 4:39; 6:40; 7:5,31,39,48; 8:30; 9:36; 10:42; 11:45,48; 17:37,42; Matt. 18:6; Acts 10:43; Phil. 1:29; I Pet. 1:8)
    - c. into Me (John 6:35; 7:38; 11:25,26; 12:44,46; 14:1,12; 16:9; 17:20)
    - d. into the Son (John 3:36; 9:35; I John 5:10)
    - e. into Jesus (John 12:11; Acts 19:4; Gal. 2:16)
    - f. into Light (John 12:36)
    - g. into God (John 14:1)
  2. *en* means "in" as in John 3:15; Mark 1:15; Acts 5:14
  3. *epi* means "in" or upon, as in Matt. 27:42; Acts 9:42; 11:17; 16:31; 22:19; Rom. 4:5,24; 9:33; 10:11; I Tim. 1:16; I Pet. 2:6

4. the DATIVE CASE with no PREPOSITION as in Gal. 3:6; Acts 18:8; 27:25; I John 3:23; 5:10
5. *hoti*, which means “believe that,” gives content as to what to believe
  - a. Jesus is the Holy One of God (John 6:69)
  - b. Jesus is the I Am (John 8:24)
  - c. Jesus is in the Father and the Father is in Him (John 10:38)
  - d. Jesus is the Messiah (John 11:27; 20:31)
  - e. Jesus is the Son of God (John 11:27; 20:31)
  - f. Jesus was sent by the Father (John 11:42; 17:8,21)
  - g. Jesus is one with the Father (John 14:10-11)
  - h. Jesus came from the Father (John 16:27,30)
  - i. Jesus identified Himself in the covenant name of the Father, “I Am” (John 8:24; 13:19)
  - j. We will live with Him (Rom. 6:8)
  - k. Jesus died and rose again (I Thess. 4:14)

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: JOHN’S USE OF THE VERB “BELIEVE” (the noun is rare)

John primarily combines “believe” with a PREPOSITION

1. *eis* means “into.” This unique construction emphasizes believers putting their trust/faith in Jesus
  - a. into His name (John 1:12; 2:23; 3:18; I John 5:13)
  - b. into Him (John 2:11; 3:15,18; 4:39; 6:40; 7:5,31,39,48; 8:30; 9:36; 10:42; 11:45,48; 12:37,42)
  - c. into Me (John 6:35; 7:38; 11:25,26; 12:44,46; 14:1,12; 16:9; 17:20)
  - d. into the One He has sent (John 6:28-29)
  - e. into the Son (John 3:36; 9:35; I John 5:10)
  - f. into Jesus (John 12:11)
  - g. into Light (John 12:36)
  - h. into God (John 12:44; 14:1)
2. *en* means “in” as in John 3:15 (Mark 1:15)
3. the DATIVE CASE with no PREPOSITION (I John 3:23; 4:50; 5:10)
4. *hoti*, which means “believe that,” gives content as to what to believe. Some examples are
  - a. Jesus is the Holy One of God (6:69)
  - b. Jesus is the I Am (8:24)
  - c. Jesus in the Father and the Father in Him (10:38)
  - d. Jesus is the Christ (11:27; 20:31)
  - e. Jesus is the Son of God (11:27; 20:31)
  - f. Jesus was sent by the Father (11:42; 17:8,21)
  - g. Jesus is one with the Father (14:10-11)
  - h. Jesus came from the Father (16:27,30)
  - i. Jesus identified Himself in the covenant name of the Father, “I am” (8:24; 13:19)

Biblical faith is in both a person and a message! It is evidenced by obedience, love, and perseverance.

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: BERNICE

1. She was the oldest daughter of Herod Agrippa I.
2. She was the sister of Agrippa II, and for a period of time was his incestuous lover. Later she was a mistress to Titus while he was a general.
3. She was also Felix’s third wife, Drusilla’s sister.
4. She was married to Herod Chalcis (Herod Agrippa I’s brother, her uncle), but when he died she moved in with her brother.
5. She later married Polemon, King of Cilicia, but left him to return to her brother who had just been given the title of “King.”
6. She was the mistress of both Vespasian and Titus.
7. For historical references
  - a. Josephus *Jewish Wars* 2:11:6; 15:1; 17:1.
  - b. Josephus’ *Antiquities of the Jew* 19:9:1; 15:1; 20:1:3
  - c. Tacitus’ *History* 2:2
  - d. Suetonius’ *Life of Titus* 7
  - e. Dio Cassius’ *Histories* 65:15; 66:18

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: BLAMELESS, INNOCENT, GUILTLESS WITHOUT REPROACH

### A. Opening Statements

1. This concept theologically describes mankind's original state (i.e. Gen. 1, the Garden of Eden).
2. Sin and rebellion have decimated this condition of perfect fellowship (i.e. Gen. 3).
3. Humans (male and female) long for the restoration of fellowship with God because they are made in His image and likeness (i.e. Gen. 1:26-27).
4. God has dealt with sinful mankind in several ways
  - a. godly leaders (i.e. Abraham, Moses, Isaiah)
  - b. sacrificial system (i.e. Lev. 1-7)
  - c. godly examples (i.e. Noah, Job)
5. Ultimately God provided the Messiah
  - a. as full revelation of Himself
  - b. as the perfect sacrifice for sin
6. Christians are made blameless
  - a. legally through Christ's imputed righteousness
  - b. progressively through the work of the Spirit
  - c. the goal of Christianity is Christlikeness (cf. Rom. 8:28-29; Eph. 1:4), which in reality, is the restoration of the image of God lost in the fall of Adam and Eve
7. Heaven is a restoration of the perfect fellowship of the Garden of Eden. Heaven is the New Jerusalem coming down out of God's presence (cf. Rev. 21:2) to a purified earth (cf. II Pet. 3:10). The Bible begins and ends on the same themes.
  - a. intimate, personal fellowship with God
  - b. in a garden setting (Gen. 1-2 and Rev. 21-22)
  - c. by prophetic statement, the presence and companionship of animals (cf. Isa. 11:6-9).

### B. Old Testament

1. There are so many different Hebrew words that carry the concept of perfection, blamelessness, innocence that it would be hard to name and show all the intricate relationships.
2. The main terms carrying the concept of perfection, guiltlessness, or innocence (according to Robert B. Girdlestone, *Synonyms of the Old Testament*, pp. 94-99) are:
  - a. *shalom*
  - b. *thamam*
  - c. *calah*
3. The Septuagint (i.e. the Bible of the early church) translates many of these concepts into Koine Greek terms used in the NT.
4. The key concept is connected to the sacrificial system.
  - a. *amōmos* (cf. Exod. 29:1; Lev. 1:3,10; 3:1,6,9; Num. 6:14; Ps. 26:1,11)
  - b. *amiantos* and *aspilus* also have cultic connotations

### C. New Testament

1. the legal concept
  - a. Hebrew legal cultic connotation is translated by *amōmos* (cf. Eph. 5:27; Phil. 2:15; I Pet. 1:19)
  - b. Greek legal connotation (cf. I Cor. 1:8; Col. 1:22)
2. Christ is the sinless, blameless, innocent One (*amōmos*) (cf. Heb. 9:14; I Pet. 1:19)
3. Christ's followers must emulate Him (*amōmos*, cf. Eph. 1:4; 5:27; Phil. 2:15; Col. 1:22; II Pet. 3:14; Jude 24; Rev. 14:5)
4. This concept is also used of church leaders
  - a. *anegklētos*, "without accusation" (cf. I Tim. 3:10; Titus 1:6-7)
  - b. *anepileptos*, "above criticism" or "no handle for reproach" (cf. I Tim. 3:2; 5:7; 6:14; Titus 2:8)
5. The concept of "undefiled" (*amiantos*) is used of
  - a. Christ Himself (cf. Heb. 7:26)
  - b. the Christian's inheritance (cf. I Pet. 1:4)
6. The concept of "wholeness" or "soundness" (*holoklēria*) (cf. Acts 3:16; I Thess. 5:23; James 1:4)
7. The concept of "without fault," guiltless innocence is conveyed by *amemptos* (cf. Luke 1:6; Phil. 2:15; 3:6; I Thess. 2:10; 3:13; 5:23)
8. The concept of "not subject to blame" is conveyed by *amōmētos* (cf. I Pet. 3:14)
9. The concept of "spotless," "unblemished" is often used in passages that have one of the above terms also (cf. I Tim. 6:14; James 1:27; I Pet. 1:19; II Pet. 3:14)

- D. The number of words in Hebrew and Greek which convey this concept shows its importance. God has provided our need through Christ and now calls on us to be like Him.

Believers are positionally, forensically declared “right,” “just,” “blameless” by the work of Christ. Now believers are to possess their position. “Walk in the light as He is in the light” (cf. I John 1:7). Walk worthy of the calling (cf. Eph. 4:1,17; 5:2,15). Jesus has restored the image of God. Intimate fellowship is now possible, but remember God wants a people who reflect His character, as His Son did. We are called to nothing less than holiness (cf. Matt. 5:20,48; Eph. 1:4; I Pet. 1:13-16). God’s holiness, not only legally, but existentially!

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: BODY AND SPIRIT

Body and Spirit are not an ontological dichotomy in mankind, but a dual relationship to both this planet and to God. The Hebrew word *nephesh* (i.e. soul) is used of both mankind and the animals in Genesis, while “spirit” (*ruah*) is used uniquely of mankind. This is not a proof-text on the nature of mankind as a two-part (dichotomous, cf. I Cor. 7:34; Heb. 4:12) or a three-part (trichotomous) being (cf. I Thess. 5:23). Mankind is primarily represented in the Bible as a unity (cf. Gen. 2:7; I Cor. 2:1). For a good summary of the theories of mankind as trichotomous, dichotomous, or a unity see Millard J. Erickson’s *Christian Theology* (second edition), pp. 538-557 and Frank Stagg’s *Polarities of Man’s Existence in Biblical Perspectives*.

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: BOLDNESS (*PARRĒSIA*)

This Greek term is a compound of “all” (*pan*) and “speech” (*rhēsis*). This freedom or boldness in speech often had the connotation of a boldness amidst opposition or rejection (cf. John 7:13; I Thess. 2:2).

In John’s writings (used 13 times) it often denotes a public proclamation (cf. John 7:4, also in Paul’s writings, Col. 2:15). However, sometimes it simply means “plainly” (cf. John 10:24; 11:14; 16:25,29).

In Acts the Apostles speak the message about Jesus in the same manner (with boldness) as Jesus spoke about the Father and His plans and promises (cf. Acts 2:29; 4:13,29,31; 9:27-28; 13:46; 14:3; 18:26; 19:8; 26:26; 28:31). Paul also asked for prayer that he might boldly preach the gospel (cf. Eph. 6:19; I Thess. 2:2) and live the gospel (cf. Phil. 1:20).

Paul’s eschatological hope in Christ gave him boldness and confidence to preach the gospel in this current evil age (cf. II Cor. 3:11-12). He also had confidence that Jesus’ followers would act appropriately (cf. II Cor. 7:4).

There is one more aspect to this term. Hebrews uses it in a unique sense of boldness in Christ to approach God and speak to Him (cf. Heb. 3:6; 4:16; 10:19,35). Believers are fully accepted and welcomed into intimacy with the Father through the Son!

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: BOASTING

These Greek terms *kauchaomai*, *kauchēma*, and *kauchēsis* are used about thirty five times by Paul and only twice in the rest of the NT (both in James). Its predominate use is in I and II Corinthians.

There are two main truths connected to boasting.

A. no flesh shall glory/boast before God (cf. I Cor. 1:29; Eph. 2:9)

B. believers should glory in the Lord (cf. I Cor. 1:31; II Cor. 10:17, which is an allusion to Jer. 9:23-24)

Therefore, there is appropriate and inappropriate boasting/glorying (i.e. pride).

1. appropriate

a. in the hope of glory (cf. Rom. 4:2)

b. in God through the Lord Jesus (cf. Rom. 5:11)

c. in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ (i.e. Paul’s main theme, cf. I Cor. 1:17-18; Gal. 6:14)

d. Paul boasts in

(1) his ministry without compensation (cf. I Cor. 9:15,16; II Cor. 10:12)

(2) his authority from Christ (cf. II Cor. 10:8,12)

(3) his not boasting in other men’s labor (as some at Corinth were, cf. II Cor. 10:15)

- (4) his racial heritage (as others were doing at Corinth, cf. II Cor. 11:17; 12:1,5,6)
- (5) his churches
  - (a) Corinth (II Cor. 7:4,14; 8:24; 9:2; 11:10)
  - (b) Thessalonika (cf. II Thess. 1:4)
- (6) his confidence in God's comfort and deliverance (cf. II Cor. 1:12)
- 2. inappropriate
  - a. in relation to Jewish heritage (cf. Rom. 2:17,23; 3:27; Gal. 6:13)
  - b. some in the Corinthian church were boasting
    - (1) in men (cf. I Cor. 3:21)
    - (2) in wisdom (cf. I Cor. 4:7)
    - (3) in freedom (cf. I Cor. 5:6)
  - c. false teachers tried to boast in the church at Corinth (cf. II Cor. 11:12)

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## **SPECIAL TOPIC: BURIAL PRACTICES**

- I. Mesopotamia
  - A. Proper burial was very important to a happy afterlife.
  - B. An example of a Mesopotamian curse is, "May the earth not receive your corpses."
- II. Old Testament
  - A. Proper burial was very important (cf. Eccl. 6:3).
  - B. It was done very quickly (cf. Sarah in Gen. 23 and Rachel in Gen. 35:19 and notice Deut. 21:23).
  - C. Improper burial was a sign of rejection and sin.
    - 1. Deuteronomy 28:26
    - 2. Isaiah 14:2
    - 3. Jeremiah 8:2; 22:19
  - D. If possible burial was done in family vaults or caves in the home area.
  - E. There was no embalming, like in Egypt. Mankind came from dust and must return to dust (ex. Gen. 3:19; Ps. 103:14; 104:29).
  - F. In rabbinical Judaism it was difficult to balance a proper respect and handling of the body with the concept of ceremonial defilement connected to dead bodies.
- III. New Testament
  - A. Burial quickly followed death, usually within twenty-four hours. The Jews often watched the grave for three days, believing that the soul could return to the body within that time frame (cf. John 11:39).
  - B. Burial involved the cleaning and wrapping of the body with spices (cf. John 11:44; 19:39-40).
  - C. There were not distinctive Jewish or Christian burial procedures or items placed in the grave in first century Palestine.

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## **SPECIAL TOPIC: BURIAL SPICES**

- A. Myrrh, a fragrant gum from Arabian trees
  - 1. This spice is mentioned twelve times in the OT, mostly in wisdom literature as a perfume
  - 2. It was one of the gifts brought by the Magi to baby Jesus (cf. Matt. 2:11)
  - 3. Its symbolism is striking
    - a. used in "holy anointing oil" (Exod. 30:23-25)
    - b. used as a gift for a king (Matt. 2:11)
    - c. used to anoint Jesus at His burial (cf. John 19:39 and symbolically in John 11:2). This was according to Jewish customs described in the Talmud (i.e. Berakhoth 53a).
- B. Aloes, a fragrant type of wood
  - 1. connected to fragrant perfume (cf. Num. 24:6; Ps. 45:8; Pro. 7:17; Song of Songs 4:14)
  - 2. it was used, mixed with myrrh, by the Egyptians as part of the embalming process
  - 3. Nicodemus brought a large amount of this to Jesus' burial and anointed Him with it (cf. John 19:39). This was according to Jewish customs described in the Talmud (i.e. Betsah 6a).



## SPECIAL TOPIC: HEBREW CANON

The Hebrew Bible is divided into three divisions (the English Bible follows the order of the Septuagint).

1. The Torah (Pentateuch), Genesis - Deuteronomy
2. The Prophets
  - a. former prophets, Joshua - Kings (except Ruth)
  - b. later prophets, Isaiah - Malachi (except Lamentations and Daniel)
3. The Writings
  - a. Wisdom Literature, Job - Proverbs
  - b. Post-exilic Literature, Ezra - Esther
  - c. Megilloth (five scrolls)
    - (1) Ruth (read at Pentecost)
    - (2) Ecclesiastes (read at tabernacles)
    - (3) Song of Songs (read at Passover)
    - (4) Lamentations (read to remember the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C.)
    - e. Esther (read at Purim)
  - d. I and II Chronicles
  - e. Daniel

## SPECIAL TOPIC: CALLED

God always takes the initiative in calling, electing, and wooing believers to Himself (cf. v. 12; John 6:44,65; 15:16; Eph. 1:4-5,11). The term “calling” is used in several theological senses:

- A. Sinners are called to salvation by the grace of God through the finished work of Christ (i.e. *klētos*, cf. Rom. 1:6-7, which is theologically similar to I Cor. 1:1-2 and II Tim. 1:9; II Pet. 1:10).
- B. Sinners call on the name of the Lord to be saved (i.e. *epikaleō*, cf. Acts 2:21; 22:16; Rom. 10:9-13). This statement is a Jewish worship idiom.
- C. Believers are called to live Christlike lives (i.e. *klēsis*, cf. I Cor. 1:26; 7:20; Eph. 4:1; Phil. 3:14; II Thess. 1:11; II Tim. 1:9).
- D. Believers are called to ministry tasks (cf. Acts 13:2; I Cor. 12:4-7; Eph. 4:1).

## SPECIAL TOPIC: PREDESTINATION (CALVINISM) VS. HUMAN FREE WILL (ARMINIANISM)

This passage is a balance to other NT passages on election. I thought it might be theologically helpful to provide my commentary notes from Rom. 8:29 and 9, as well as Eph. 1.

- I. Romans 8:29 - Paul uses “foreknew” (*proginōskō*, “to know before”) twice, here and 11:2. In 11:2 it refers to God’s covenant love for Israel before time began. Remember that the term “know” in Hebrew related to intimate, personal relationship, not to facts about someone (cf. Gen. 4:1; Jer. 1:5). Here it was included in a chain of eternal events (cf. Rom. 8:29-30). This term was linked with predestination. However, it must be stated that God’s foreknowledge is not the basis of election because if that were so, then election would be based on fallen humanity’s future response, which would be human performance. This term is also found in Acts 26:5; I Pet. 1:2,20 and II Pet. 3:17.

- A. “foreknew” (*proginōskō*, “to know before”)

The terms “foreknow” or “predestine” are both compounds with the preposition “before” and therefore, should be translated “to know before,” “to set bounds before,” or “mark off before.” The definitive passages on predestination in the NT are Rom. 8:28-30; Eph. 1:13-14; and Rom. 9. These

texts obviously stress that God is sovereign. He is in total control of all things. There is a preset divine plan being worked out in time. However, this plan is not arbitrary or selective. It is based not only on God’s sovereignty and foreknowledge, but on His unchanging character of love, mercy, and undeserved grace.

We must be careful of our western (American) individualism or our evangelical zeal coloring this wonderful truth. We must also guard against being polarized into the historical, theological conflicts between Augustine versus Pelagius or Calvinism versus Arminianism.



B. “predestined” (*proorizō*, “to set the bounds before”)

Predestination is not a doctrine meant to limit God’s love, grace, and mercy nor to exclude some from the gospel. It is meant to strengthen believers by molding their world-view. God is for all mankind (cf. I Tim. 2:4; II Pet. 3:9). God is in control of all things. Who or what can separate us from Him (cf. Rom. 8:31-39)? God views all history as present. Humans are time bound. Our perspective and mental abilities are limited. There is no contradiction between God’s sovereignty and mankind’s free will. It is a covenantal structure. This is another example of truth given in dialectical tension. Biblical doctrines are presented from different perspectives. They often appear paradoxical. The truth is a balance between the seemingly opposite pairs. We must not remove the tension by picking one of the truths. We must not isolate any biblical truth into a compartment by itself.

It is also important to add that the goal of election is not only heaven when we die, but Christlikeness now (cf. Rom. 8:29; Eph. 1:4; 2:10). We were chosen to be “holy and blameless.” God chooses to change us so that others may see the change and respond by faith to God in Christ. Predestination is not a personal privilege, but a covenantal responsibility. This is the major truth of the passage. This is the goal of Christianity. Holiness is God’s will for every believer. God’s election is to Christlikeness (cf. Eph. 1:4), not a special standing. The image of God, which was given to man in creation (cf. Gen. 1:26; 5:1,3; 9:6), is to be restored.

C. “conformed to the image of His Son”—God’s ultimate goal is the restoration of the image lost in the Fall. Believers are foreordained to Christlikeness (cf. Eph. 1:4).

## II. Romans 9

A. Chapter 9 is one of the strongest NT passages on God’s sovereignty (the other being, Eph. 1:3-14), while Romans 10 states humans’ free will clearly and repeatedly (cf. “everyone” v. 4; “whosoever” vv. 11,13; “all” v. 12 [twice]). Paul never tries to reconcile this theological tension. They are both true! Most Bible doctrines are presented in paradoxical or dialectical pairs. Most systems of theology are logical half-truths. Augustinianism and Calvinism versus semi-Peagianism and Arminianism have elements of truth and error. Biblical tension between doctrines is preferable to a proof-texted, dogmatic, rational, theological system that forces the Bible onto a preconceived interpretive grid.

B. This same truth (found in Rom. 9:23) is stated in Rom. 8:29-30 and Eph. 1:4,11. This chapter is the strongest expression of God’s sovereignty in the NT. There can be no dispute that God is in total charge of creation and redemption. This great truth should never be softened or diminished.

However, it must be balanced with God’s choice of covenant as a means of relating to human creation, made in His image. It is surely true that some OT covenants, like Gen. 15, are unconditional and do not relate at all to human response, but other covenants are conditioned on human response (e.g. Eden, Noah, Moses, David). God has a plan of redemption for His creation;

no human can affect this plan. God has chosen to allow individuals to participate in His plans. This opportunity for participation is a theological tension between sovereignty (Rom. 9) and human free will (Rom. 10).

It is not appropriate to select one biblical emphasis and ignore another. There is tension between doctrines because eastern people present truth in dialectical or tension-filled pairs. Doctrines must be held in relationship to other doctrines. Truth is a mosaic of truths.

## III. Ephesians 1

A. Election is a wonderful doctrine. However, it is not a call to favoritism, but a call to be a channel, a tool or means of others’ redemption! In the OT the term was used primarily for service; in the NT it is used primarily for salvation which issues in service. The Bible never reconciles the seeming contradiction between God’s sovereignty and mankind’s free will, but affirms them both! A good example of the biblical tension would be Romans 9 on God’s sovereign choice and Romans 10 on mankind’s necessary response (cf. 10:11,13).

The key to this theological tension may be found in 1:4. Jesus is God’s elect man and all are potentially elect in Him (Karl Barth). Jesus is God’s “yes” to fallen mankind’s need (Karl Barth). Ephesians 1:4 also helps clarify the issue by asserting that the goal of predestination is not heaven only, but holiness (Christlikeness). We are often attracted to the benefits of the gospel and ignore the responsibilities! God’s call (election) is for time as well as eternity!

Doctrines come in relation to other truths, not as single, unrelated truths. A good analogy would be a constellation versus a single star. God presents truth in eastern, not western, genres. We must not remove the tension caused by dialectical (paradoxical) pairs of doctrinal truths (God as transcendent versus God as immanent; security vs. perseverance; Jesus as equal with the Father vs. Jesus as subservient to the Father; Christian freedom vs. Christian responsibility to a covenant partner, etc).

The theological concept of “covenant” unites the sovereignty of God (who always takes the initiative and sets the agenda) with a mandatory initial and continuing repentant, faith response from man. Be careful of proof-texting one side of the paradox and depreciating the other! Be careful of asserting only your favorite doctrine or system of theology.

B. “He chose us” in Eph. 1:4 is an AORIST MIDDLE INDICATIVE which emphasizes the subject. This focuses on the Father’s choice before time. God’s choice must not be understood in the Islamic

sense of determinism, nor in the ultra-Calvinistic sense as some versus others, but in the covenantal sense. God promised to redeem fallen mankind (cf. Gen. 3:15). God called and chose Abraham to choose all humans (cf. Gen. 12:3; Exod. 19:5-6). God Himself elected all persons who would exercise faith in Christ. God always takes the initiative in salvation (cf. John 6:44,65). This text and Rom. 9 are the biblical basis for the doctrine of predestination emphasized by Augustine and Calvin.

God chose believers not only to salvation (justification), but also to sanctification (cf. Col. 1:12). This could relate to (1) our position in Christ (cf. II Cor. 5:21) or (2) God’s desire to reproduce His

character in His children (cf. 2:10; Rom. 8:28-29; Gal. 4:19). God’s will for His children is both heaven one day and Christlikeness now!

“In Him” is a key concept of Eph. 1:4. The Father’s blessings, grace, and salvation flow through Christ (cf. John 14:6). Notice the repetition of this grammatical form (LOCATIVE of sphere) in v. 3, “in Christ”; vs. 4, “in Him”; v. 7, “in Him”; v. 9, “in Him”; v. 10, “in Christ,” “in

Him”; v. 12, “in Christ” and v. 13, “in Him” (twice). Jesus is God’s “yes” to fallen mankind (Karl Barth). Jesus is the elect man and all are potentially elect in Him. All of God the Father’s blessings flow through Christ.

The phrase “before the foundation of the world” is also used in Matt. 25:34; John 17:24; I Pet. 1:19-20 and Rev. 13:8. It shows the Triune God’s redemptive activity even before Gen. 1:1.

Humans are limited by their sense of time; everything to us is past, present and future, but not to God.

The goal of predestination is holiness, not privilege. God’s call is not to a selected few of Adam’s children, but to all! It is a call to be what God intended mankind to be, like Himself (cf. I Thess. 5:23; II Thess. 2:13); in His image (cf. Gen. 1:26-27). To turn predestination into a theological tenet instead of a holy life is a tragedy. Often our theologies speak louder than the biblical text.

The term “blameless” (*amōmos*) or “free from blemish” is used of (1) Jesus (cf. Heb. 9:14; I Pet. 1:19); (2) Zachariah and Elizabeth (cf. Luke 1:6); (3) Paul (cf. Phil. 3:6); and (4) all true Christians (cf. Phil. 2:15; I Thess. 3:13; 5:23). God’s unalterable will for every Christian is not only heaven later, but Christlikeness now (cf. Rom. 8:29-30; Gal. 4:19; I Pet. 1:2). Believers are to reflect God’s characteristics to a lost world for the purpose of evangelism.

Grammatically the phrase “in love” in this verse could go with either v. 4 or v. 5. However, when this phrase is used in other places in Ephesians it always refers to human love for God (cf. 3:17; 4:2,15,16).

- C. In Eph. 1:5 the phrase “He predestined us” is an AORIST ACTIVE PARTICIPLE. This Greek term is a compound of “before” and “mark off.” It refers to God’s predetermined redemptive plan (cf. Luke 22:22; Acts 2:23; 4:28; 17:31; Rom. 8:29-30). Predestination is one of several truths related to mankind’s salvation. It is part of a theological pattern or series of related truths. It was never meant to be emphasized in isolation! Biblical truth has been given in a series of tension-filled, paradoxical pairs. Denominationalism has tended to remove the biblical tension by emphasizing only one of the dialectical truths (predestination vs. human free will; security of the believer vs. perseverance of the saints; original sin vs. volitional sin; sinlessness vs. sinning less; instantaneously declared sanctification vs. progressive sanctification; faith vs. works; Christian freedom vs. Christian responsibility; transcendence vs. immanence).

God’s choice is not based on foreknowledge of human performance, but on His gracious character (cf. vv. 9 & 11). He wishes that all (not just some special ones like the Gnostics or modern-day ultra-Calvinists) would be saved (cf. Ezek. 18:21-23,32; John 3:16-17; I Tim. 2:4; 4:10; Titus 2:11; II Pet. 3:9). God’s grace (God’s character) is the theological key to this passage (cf. vv. 6a, 7c, 9b), as God’s mercy is the key to the other passage on predestination, Rom. 9-11.

Fallen mankind’s only hope is the grace and mercy of God (cf. Isa. 53:6 and several other OT texts quoted in Rom. 3:9-18). It is crucial in interpreting these first theological chapters to realize that Paul emphasizes those things which are totally unrelated to human performance: predestination (chap. 1), grace (chap. 2), and God’s eternal plan of redemption (mystery, 2:11- 3:13). This was to counterbalance the emphasis of the false teachers on human merit and pride.

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: CHRISTIAN FREEDOM vs. CHRISTIAN RESPONSIBILITY

- A. This chapter tries to balance the paradox of Christian freedom and responsibility. The literary unit runs through 15:13.
- B. The problem which precipitated this chapter was possibly the tension between Gentile and Jewish believers in the church of Rome. Before conversion the Jews tended to be legalistic and the pagans tended to be immoral. Remember, this chapter is addressed to sincere followers of Jesus. This chapter does not address carnal believers (cf. I Cor. 3:1). The highest motive is ascribed to both groups. There is danger in the extremes on both sides. This discussion is not a license for nit-picking legalism or flaunting liberality.
- C. Believers must be careful not to make their theology or ethics the standard for all other believers (cf. II Cor. 10:12). Believers must walk in the light they have, but understand that their theology is not automatically God’s theology. Believers are still affected by sin. We must encourage, exhort, and teach one another from the Scriptures, reason, and experience, but always in love. The more one knows the more one knows he does not know (cf. I Cor. 13:12)!
- D. One’s attitude and motives before God are the real keys in evaluating his/her actions. Christians will stand before Christ to be judged on how they treated one another (cf. vv. 10,12 and II Cor. 5:10).
- E. Martin Luther said, “A Christian man is a most free Lord of all, subject to none; the Christian man is a most dutiful servant of all, subject to all.” Biblical truth is often presented in a tension-filled paradox.
- F. This difficult but crucial subject is dealt with in the entire literary unit of Romans 14:1-15:13 and also in I Corinthians 8-10 and Colossians 2:8-23.
- G. However, it needs to be stated that pluralism among sincere believers is not a bad thing. Each believer has strengths and weaknesses. Each must walk in the light he/she has, always open to the Spirit and the Bible for more light. In this period of seeing through a glass darkly (I Cor. 13:8-13) one must walk in love (v. 15), and peace (vv. 17,19) for mutual edification.
- H. The titles “stronger” and “weaker” which Paul gives to these groups prejudices them to us. This was certainly not Paul’s intent. Both groups were sincere believers. We are not to attempt to mold other Christians into ourselves! We accept one another in Christ!
- I. The entire argument could be outlined as
1. accept one another because God accepts us in Christ (cf. 14:1,3; 15:7);

2. do not judge one another because Christ is our only Master and Judge (cf. 14:3-12);
3. love is more important than personal freedom (cf. 14:13-23);
4. follow Christ's example and lay down your rights for others' edification & good (cf. 15:1-13).

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## **SPECIAL TOPIC: CHRISTIANITY IS CORPORATE**

- A. Paul's plural metaphors
  1. body
  2. field
  3. building
- B. The term "saint" is always PLURAL (except Phil. 4:21, but even there it is also corporate)
- C. The Reformation emphasis of Martin Luther on the "priesthood of the believer" is not truly biblical. It is the priesthood of believers (cf. Exod. 19:6; I Pet. 2:5,9; Rev. 1:6).
- D. Each believer is gifted for the common good (cf. I Cor. 12:7)
- E. Only in cooperation can the people of God be effective. Ministry is corporate (cf. Eph. 4:11-12).

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## **SPECIAL TOPIC: COINS IN USE IN PALESTINE IN JESUS' DAY**

- I. Copper coins
  - A. *cherma* - little value (cf. John 2:15)
  - B. *chalchos* - little value (cf. Matt. 10:9; Mark 12:41)
  - C. *assarion* - a Roman copper coin with about 1/16 of a *dēnarius* (cf. Matt. 10:29)
  - D. *kodrantes* - a Roman copper coin worth 1/64 of a *dēnarius* (cf. Matt. 5:26)
  - E. *lepton* - a Jewish copper coin worth about 1/128 of a *dēnarius* (cf. Mark 12:42; Luke 21:2)
  - F. *quadrans/farthing* - a Roman copper coin of little value
- II. Silver coins
  - A. *arguros* ("silver coin") - much more valuable than copper or bronze coins (cf. Matt. 10:9; 26:15)
  - B. *dēnarius* - a Roman silver coin worth a day's labor (cf. Matt. 18:28; Mark 6:37)
  - C. *drachmē* - a Greek silver coin equivalent in value to a *dēnarius* (cf. Luke 15:9)
  - D. *di-drachmon* - a double *drachmas* equaled a Jewish ½ shekel (cf. Matt. 17:24)
  - E. *statēr* - a silver coin worth about four *dēnarii* (cf. Matt. 17:27)
- III. Gold coins - *chrysolos* ("gold coins") - most valuable coins (cf. Matt. 10:9)
- IV. General terms for weights of metals
  - A. *minaa* - Latin *mina*, a weight of metal equivalent to 100 *dēnarii* (cf. Luke 19:13)
  - B. *talanton* - a Greek unit of weight (cf. Matt. 18:24; 25:15,16,20,24,25,28)
    1. silver worth 6,000 *dēnarii*
    2. gold worth 180,000 *dēnarii*
  - C. *sheqel* - Jewish OT weight of silver (cf. Gen. 23:15; 37:28; Exod. 21:32)
    1. *pīm* - 2/3 shekel
    2. *beka* - ½ shekel
    3. *gerah* - 1/20 shekel
- Larger units
  1. *maneh* - 50 shekels
  2. *kikkar* - 3,000 shekels

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: COMFORT

The following is taken from my commentary on II Cor. 1:4-11.

“‘**comfort**’ This term, *paraklēsis*, in its different forms, is used ten times in vv. 3-11. It is the key term throughout the entire passage and also in chapters 1-9, where it is used twenty-five times. The word means “to call alongside.” It was often used in a judicial sense of an advocate who rendered legal aid, comfort, and guidance.

In this context it is used in the sense of encouragement and consolation. A related term, *paraklētos*, is used of the Holy Spirit in John 14:16,26; 15:26; 16:7; and of Jesus in I John 2:1. In this context it is used of the Father.

The verb form of *parakaleō* is used in several senses:

- A. the Septuagint
  - 1. exhort, Deut. 3:28
  - 2. comfort, Gen. 24:67; 37:35; Ps. 119:50 (in a Messianic sense in Isa. 40:1; 49:13; 51:3; 61:2)
  - 3. have compassion, Deut. 32:36; Jdgs. 2:18; Ps. 135:14
  - 4. console, Isa. 35:4
  - 5. call, Exod. 15:13
- B. Paul’s writings to Corinth
  - 1. exhort, I Cor. 1:10; 4:16; 14:30-31; 16:15-16; II Cor. 2:8; 5:20; 6:1; 8:4,6; 10:1
  - 2. comfort, cheer up, II Cor. 1:4,6; 2:7; 7:6,7,13; 13:11
  - 3. have compassion, console, I Cor. 4:13
  - 4. implore, entreat, request, I Cor. 16:12; II Cor. 9:5; 12:18 ”

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: CONFESSION

- A. There are two forms of the same Greek root used for confession or profession, *homologeō* and *exomologeō*. The compound term James uses is from *homo*, the same; *legō*, to speak; and *ex*, out of. The basic meaning is to say the same thing, to agree with. The *ex* added to the idea of a public declaration.
- B. The English translations of this word group are
  - 1. praise
  - 2. agree
  - 3. declare
  - 4. profess
  - 5. confess
- C. This word group had two seemingly opposite usages
  - 1. to praise (God)
  - 2. to admit sin

These may have developed from mankind’s sense of the holiness of God and its own sinfulness. To acknowledge one truth is to acknowledge both. This may also explain the opening three questions: the first and third deal with suffering and sickness (possibly caused by sin) and the second, cheerful praise.
- D. The NT usages of the word group are
  - 1. to promise (cf. Matt. 14:7; Acts 7:17)
  - 2. to agree or consent to something (cf. John 1:20; Thess. 22:6; Acts 24:14; Heb. 11:13)
  - 3. to praise (cf. Matt. 11:25; Thess. 10:21; Rom. 14:11; 15:9)
  - 4. to assent to
    - a. a person (cf. Matt. 10:32; Thess. 12:8; John 9:22; 12:42; Rom. 10:9; Phil. 2:11; Rev. 3:5)
    - b. a truth (cf. Acts 23:8; II Cor. 11:13; I John 4:2)
  - 5. to make a public declaration of (legal sense developed into religious affirmation, cf. Acts 24:14; I Tim. 6:13)
    - a. without admission of guilt (cf. I Tim. 6:12; Heb. 10:23)
    - b. with an admission of guilt (cf. Matt. 3:6; Acts 19:18; Heb. 4:14; James 5:16; I John 1:9)

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: CONSCIENCE

These Greek terms *kauchaomai*, *kauchēma*, and *kauchēsis* are used about thirty-five times by Paul and only twice in the rest of the NT (both in James). Its predominate use is in I and II Corinthians.

- A. There are two main truths connected to boasting.
  - 1. no flesh shall glory/boast before God (cf. I Cor. 1:29; Eph. 2:9)
  - 2. believers should glory in the Lord (cf. I Cor. 1:31; II Cor. 10:17, which is an allusion to Jer. 9:23-24)
- B. Therefore, there is appropriate and inappropriate boasting/glorying (i.e. pride).
  - 1. appropriate
    - a. in the hope of glory (cf. Rom. 4:2)
    - b. in God through the Lord Jesus (cf. Rom. 5:11)
    - c. in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ (i.e. Paul's main theme, cf. I Cor. 1:17-18; Gal. 6:14)
    - d. Paul boasts in
      - (1) his ministry without compensation (cf. I Cor. 9:15,16; II Cor. 10:12)
      - (2) his authority from Christ (cf. II Cor. 10:8,12)
      - (3) his not boasting in other men's labor (as some at Corinth were, cf. II Cor. 10:15)
      - (4) his racial heritage (as others were doing at Corinth, cf. II Cor. 11:17; 12:1,5,6)
      - (5) his churches
        - (a) Corinth (cf. II Cor. 7:4,14; 8:24; 9:2; 11:10)
        - (b) Thessalonika (cf. II Thess. 1:4)
      - (6) his confidence in God's comfort and deliverance (cf. II Cor. 1:12)
  - 2. inappropriate
    - a. in relation to Jewish heritage (cf. Rom. 2:17,23; 3:27; Gal. 6:13)
    - b. some in the Corinthian church were boasting
      - (1) in men (cf. I Cor. 3:21)
      - (2) in wisdom (cf. I Cor. 4:7)
      - (3) in freedom (cf. I Cor. 5:6)
    - c. false teachers tried to boast in the church at Corinth (cf. II Cor. 11:12)

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: THE CITY OF CORINTH

- A. Winter shipping lanes around the southernmost point of Greece (i.e. Cape Malea) were very dangerous. Therefore, a land route of the shortest possible length was crucial. The geographical location of Corinth on the four mile isthmus between the Gulf of Corinth (i.e. Adriatic Sea) and the Saronic Gulf (i.e. Aegean Sea) made the city a major commercial (i.e. shipping and trading center specializing in types of pottery and a special type of brass) and military center. In Paul's day this was literally where the cultures of the East and West met.
- B. Corinth was also a major cultural center of the Greco-Roman world because it hosted the bi-annual Isthmian Games which began in 581 B.C. (at the Temple of Poseidon). Only the Olympic Games in Athens, every four years, rivaled them in size and importance (Thucydides, *Hist.* 1.13.5).
- C. In 146 B.C. Corinth was involved in a revolt (i.e. the Achaean League) against Rome and was destroyed by the Roman General Lucius Mummius and the population dispersed. Because of its economical and military importance, it was rebuilt in either 46 or 48 B.C. by Julius Caesar. It became a Roman colony where Roman soldiers retired. It was a mimic of Rome in architecture and culture and the administrative center of the Roman (i.e. Senatorial) province of Achaia in 27 B.C. It became an Imperial Province in A.D. 15.
- D. The acropolis of Old Corinth, rising more than 1880 feet above the plain, was the site of the temple to Aphrodite. To this temple were attached 1,000 prostitutes (Strabo, *Geography*, 8.6.20-22). To be called "a Corinthian" (i.e. *Korinthiazesthai*, coined by Aristophanes [450-385 B.C.]) was synonymous to loose, riotous living. This temple, as most of the city, was destroyed in an earthquake about 150 years before Paul arrived, as it was again in A.D. 77. It is uncertain whether the fertility cult continued in Paul's day. Since the Romans destroyed the city in 146 B.C. and killed or enslaved all of its citizens, the Greek flavor of the city was superseded by its Roman colonial status (Pausanias, II.3.7).

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: CORNERSTONE

- I. OT Usages

- A. The concept of a stone as a hard durable item which made a good foundation was used to describe YHWH (cf. Ps. 18:1).
- B. It then developed into a Messianic title (cf. Gen. 49:24; Ps. 118:22; Isa. 28:16).
- C. It came to represent a judgment from YHWH by the Messiah (cf. Isa. 8:14; Dan. 2:34-35,44-45).
- D. This developed into a building metaphor.
  - 1. a foundation stone, the first placed, which was secure and set the angles for the rest of the building, called “the cornerstone”
  - 2. it could also refer to the final stone put in place, which holds the walls together (cf. Zech. 4:7; Eph. 2:20,21), called “the cap stone” from the Hebrew *rush* (i.e. head)
  - 3. it could refer to the “key stone,” which is in the center of the doorway arch and holds the weight of the entire wall.

## II. NT Usages

- A. Jesus quoted Ps. 118 several times in reference to Himself (cf. Matt. 21:41-46; Mark 12:10-11; Luke 20:17)
- B. Paul uses Ps. 118 in connection with YHWH’s rejection of faithless, rebellious Israel (cf. Rom. 9:33)
- C. Paul uses the concept of a “cap stone” in Eph. 2:20-22 in reference to Christ
- D. Peter uses this concept of Jesus in I Pet. 2:1-10. Jesus is the cornerstone and believers are the living stones (i.e. believers as temples, cf. I Cor. 6:19), built on Him (Jesus is the new Temple, cf. Mark 14:58; Matt. 12:6; John 2:19-20).

The Jews rejected the very foundation of their hope when they rejected Jesus as Messiah.

## III. Theological Statements

- A. YHWH allowed David/Solomon to build a temple. He told them that if they kept the covenant He would bless them and be with them, but if they did not the temple would be in ruins (cf. I Kgs. 9:1-9)!
- B. Rabbinical Judaism focused on form and ritual and neglected the personal aspect of faith (this is not a blanket statement; there were godly rabbis). God seeks a daily, personal, godly relationship with those created in His image (cf. Gen. 1:26-27). Luke 20:17-18 contains frightening words of judgment.
- C. Jesus used the concept of a temple to represent His physical body. This continues and expands the concept of personal. Faith in Jesus as the Messiah is key to a relationship with YHWH.
- D. Salvation is meant to restore the image of God in human beings so that fellowship with God is possible. The goal of Christianity is Christlikeness now. Believers are to become living stones built on/patterned after Christ (the new temple).
- E. Jesus is the foundation of our faith and the cap stone of our faith (i.e. the Alpha and Omega). Yet also the stone of stumbling and the rock of offense. To miss Him is to miss everything. There can be no middle ground here!

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: COVENANT

The OT term *berith*, covenant, is not easy to define. There is no matching VERB in Hebrew. All attempts to derive an etymological definition have proved unconvincing. However, the obvious centrality of the concept has forced scholars to examine the word usage to attempt to determine its functional meaning.

Covenant is the means by which the one true God deals with His human creation. The concept of covenant, treaty, or agreement is crucial in understanding the biblical revelation. The tension between God’s sovereignty and human free-will are clearly seen in the concept of covenant. Some covenants are based on God’s character, actions, and purposes.

- 1. creation itself (cf. Gen. 1-2)
- 2. the call of Abraham (cf. Gen. 12)
- 3. the covenant with Abraham (cf. Gen. 15)
- 4. the preservation and promise to Noah (cf. Gen. 6-9)

However, the very nature of covenant demands a response

- 1. by faith Adam must obey God and not eat of the tree in the midst of Eden (cf. Gen. 2)
- 2. by faith Abraham must leave his family, follow God, and believe in future descendants (cf. Gen. 12,15)
- 3. by faith Noah must build a huge boat far from water and gather the animals (cf. Gen. 6-9)
- 4. by faith Moses brought the Israelites out of Egypt and received specific guidelines for religious and social life with promises of blessings and cursings (cf. Deut. 27-28)

This same tension involving God’s relationship to humanity is addressed in the “new covenant.” The tension can be clearly seen in comparing Ezek. 18 with Ezek. 36:27-37. Is the covenant based on God’s gracious actions or mandated human response? This is the burning issue of the Old Covenant and the New. The goals of both are the same: (1) the restoration of fellowship lost in Gen. 3 and (2) the establishment of a righteous people who reflect God’s character.

The new covenant of Jer. 31:31-34 solves the tension by removing human performance as the means of attaining acceptance. God’s law becomes an internal desire instead of an external performance. The goal of a godly, righteous people remains the same, but the methodology changes. Fallen mankind proved themselves inadequate to be God’s reflected image (cf. Rom. 3:9-18). The problem was not the covenant, but human sinfulness and weakness (cf. Rom. 7; Gal. 3).

The same tension between OT unconditional and conditional covenants remains in the NT. Salvation is absolutely free in the finished work of



Jesus Christ, but it requires repentance and faith (both initially and continually). It is both a legal pronouncement and a call to Christlikeness, an indicative statement of acceptance and an imperative to holiness! Believers are not saved by their performance, but unto obedience (cf. Eph. 2:8-10). Godly living becomes the evidence of salvation, not the means of salvation.

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: THE DEBATE OVER THE DATE OF THE EXODUS

There have been two scholarly opinions on the date of the Exodus.

- A. from I Kings 6:1, which says, “480 years from the Exodus to the building of Solomon’s Temple”
  1. Solomon began to reign in 970 B.C. This is figured by using the battle of *Qarqar* (853 B.C.) as a certain starting date.
  2. The Temple was built in his fourth year (965 B.C.), so the Exodus occurred about 1445/6 B.C.
  3. This would make it occur in the 18<sup>th</sup> Egyptian Dynasty.
    - a. The Pharaoh of the oppression would be *Thutmose III* (1490-1436 B.C.).
    - b. The Pharaoh of the Exodus would be *Amenhotep II* (1436-1407 B.C.).
      - (1) Some believe evidence from Jericho based on the fact that no diplomatic correspondence occurred between Jericho and Egypt during the reign of *Amenhotep III* (1413-1377 B.C.).
      - (2) The *Amarna* texts record diplomatic correspondence written on ostraca about the *Habiru* overrunning the land of Canaan in the reign of *Amenhotep III*. Therefore, the Exodus occurred in the reign of *Amenhotep II*.
      - (3) The period of the Judges is not long enough if the 13<sup>th</sup> century is the date of the Exodus.
  4. The possible problems with these dates.
    - a. The Septuagint (LXX) has 440 years, not 480.
    - b. It is possible that 480 years is representative of twelve generations of forty years each (therefore, a figurative number).
    - c. There are twelve generations of priests from Aaron to Solomon (cf. I Chr. 6), then twelve from Solomon to the Second Temple. The Jews, like the Greeks, reckoned a generation as forty years. So, there is a 480 year period back and forward (symbolic use of numbers, cf. Bimson’s *Redating the Exodus and Conquest*).
  5. There are three other texts that mention dates.
    - a. Genesis 15:13,16 (cf. Acts 7:6), 400 years of bondage
    - b. Exodus 12:40-41 (cf. Gal. 3:17)
      - (1) MT - 430 years of sojourn in Egypt
      - (2) LXX - 215 years of sojourn in Egypt
    - c. Judges 11:26 - 300 years between Jephthah’s day and the conquest (supports 1445 date)
    - d. Acts 13:19 - exodus, wanderings, and conquest - 450 years
  6. The author of Kings used specific historical references and did not round numbers (Edwin Thiele, *A Chronology of the Hebrew Kings*, pp. 83-85)
- B. The tentative evidence from archaeology seems to point toward a date of 1290 B.C. or the nineteenth Egyptian Dynasty.
  1. Joseph was able to visit his father and Pharaoh in the same day. The first native Pharaoh who began to move the capital of Egypt from Thebes back to the Nile Delta, to a place called *Avaris/Zoan/Tanis*, which was the old Hyksos capital, was *Seti I* (1309-1290 B.C. ). He would be the Pharaoh of the oppression.
    - a. This seems to fit two pieces of information about the Hyksos reign of Egypt.
      - (1) a stele has been found from the time of Ramesis II that commemorates the founding of Avaris four hundred years earlier (1700’s B.C. by the Hyksos)
      - (2) The prophecy of Gen. 15:13 speaks of a 400 year oppression.
    - b. This implies that Joseph’s rise to power was under a Hyksos (Semitic) Pharaoh. The new Egyptian dynasty is referred to in Exod. 1:8.
  2. The Hyksos, an Egyptian word meaning “rulers of foreign lands,” who were a group of non-Egyptian Semitic rulers, controlled Egypt during the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> Dynasties (1720-1570 B.C.). Some want to relate them to Joseph’s rise to power. If we subtract the 430 years of Exod. 12:40 from 1720 B.C., we get a date of about 1290 B.C.
  3. Seti I’s son was Rameses II (1290-1224 B.C.). This name is mentioned as one of the store cities built by the Hebrew slaves, Exod. 1:11. Also this same district in Egypt near Goshen
  4. is called Ramesis, Gen. 47:11. *Avaris/Zoan/Tanis* was known as “House of Rameses” from 1300-1100 B.C.
  5. Thutmose III was known as a great builder, as was Rameses II.
  6. Rameses II had forty-seven daughters living in separate palaces.
  7. Archaeology has shown that most of the large walled cities of Canaan (Hazor, Debir, Lachish) were destroyed and rapidly rebuilt around 1250 B.C. In allowing for a thirty-eight year wilderness wandering period, this fits a date of 1290 B.C.
  8. Archaeology has found a reference to the Israelites being in southern Canaan on a memorial stele of Rameses’ successor, *Merneptah*

(1224-1214 B.C., cf. The Stele of Merneptah, dated 1220 B.C.).

9. Edom and Moab seem to have attained strong national identity in the late 1300's B.C. These countries were not organized in the fifteenth century (Glueck).
10. The book, *Redating the Exodus and Conquest* by John J. Bimson, published by the University of Sheffield, 1978, argues against all of the archaeological evidence for an early date.

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

### I. Old Testament

- A. All humans go to *She'ol* (etymology uncertain), which is a way of referring to death or the grave, mostly in Wisdom Literature and Isaiah. In the OT it was a shadowy, conscious, but joyless existence (cf. Job 10:21-22; 38:17; Ps. 107:10,14).
- B. *She'ol* characterized
  1. associated with God's judgment (fire), Deut. 32:22
  2. associated with punishment even before Judgment Day, Ps. 18:4-5
  3. associated with *Abaddon* (destruction), but also open to God, Job 26:6; Ps. 139:8; Amos 9:2
  4. associated with "the Pit" (grave), Ps. 16:10; Isa 14:15; Ezek. 31:15-17
  5. wicked descend alive into *She'ol*, Num. 16:30,33; Ps. 55:15
  6. personified often as an animal with a large mouth, Num. 16:30; Isa. 5:14; 14:9; Hab. 2:5
  7. people there called *Shades*, Isa. 14:9-11)

### II. New Testament

- A. The Hebrew *She'ol* is translated by the Greek *Hades* (the unseen world)
- B. *Hades* characterized
  1. refers to death, Matt. 16:18
  2. linked to death, Rev. 1:18; 6:8; 20:13-14
  3. often analogous to the place of permanent punishment (*Gehenna*), Matt. 11:23 (OT quote); Luke 10:15; 16:23-24
  4. often analogous to the grave, Luke 16:23
- C. Possibly divided (rabbis)
  1. righteous part called paradise (really another name for heaven, cf. II Cor. 12:4; Rev. 2:7), Luke 23:43
  2. wicked part called *Tartarus*, II Pet. 2:4, where it is a holding place for evil angels (cf. Gen. 6; I Enoch)
- D. *Gehenna*
  1. Reflects the OT phrase, "the valley of the sons of Hinnom," (south of Jerusalem). It was the place where the Phoenician fire god, *Molech* was worshiped by child sacrifice (cf. II Kgs. 16:3; 21:6; II Chr. 28:3; 33:6), which was forbidden in Lev. 18:21; 20:2-5
  2. Jeremiah changed it from a place of pagan worship into a site of YHWH's judgment (cf. Jer. 7:32; 19:6-7). It became the place of fiery, eternal judgment in I Enoch 90:26-27 and Sib. 1:103.
  3. The Jews of Jesus' day were so appalled by their ancestors' participation in pagan worship by child sacrifice, that they turned this area into the garbage dump for Jerusalem. Many of Jesus' metaphors for eternal judgment came from this landfill (fire, smoke, worms, stench, cf. Mark 9:44,46). The term *Gehenna* is used only by Jesus (except in James 3:6).
  4. Jesus' usage of *Gehenna*
    - a. fire, Matt. 5:22; 18:9; Mark 9:43
    - b. permanent, Mark 9:48 (Matt. 25:46)
    - c. place of destruction (both soul and body), Matt. 10:28
    - d. paralleled to *She'ol*, Matt. 5:29-30; 18:9
    - e. characterizes the wicked as "son of hell," Matt. 23:15
    - f. result of judicial sentence, Matt. 23:33; Luke 12:5
    - g. the concept of *Gehenna* is parallel to the second death (cf. Rev. 2:11; 20:6,14) or the lake of fire (cf. Matt. 13:42,50; Rev. 19:20; 20:10,14-15; 21:8). It is possible the lake of fire becomes the permanent dwelling place of humans (from *She'ol*) and evil angels (from *Tartarus*, II Pet. 2:4; Jude 6 or the abyss, cf. Luke 8:31; Rev. 9:1-10; 20:1,3).
    - h. it was not designed for humans, but for Satan and his angels, Matt. 25:41
- E. It is possible, because of the overlap of *She'ol*, *Hades*, and *Gehenna* that
  1. originally all humans went to *She'ol/Hades*
  2. their experience there (good or bad) is exacerbated after Judgment Day, but the place of the wicked remains the same (this is why the KJV translated *hades* (grave) as *gehenna* (hell)).
  3. only NT text to mention torment before Judgment is the parable of Luke 16:19-31 (Lazarus and the Rich Man). *She'ol* is also described as a place of punishment now (cf. Deut. 32:22; Ps. 18:1-5). However, one can not establish a doctrine on a parable.



### III. Intermediate state between death and resurrection

- A. The NT does not teach the “immortality of the soul,” which is one of several ancient views of the after life.
  - 1. human souls exist before their physical life
  - 2. human souls are eternal before and after physical death
  - 3. often the physical body is seen as a prison and death as release back to pre-existent state
- B. The NT hints at a disembodied state between death and resurrection
  - 1. Jesus speaks of a division between body and soul, Matt. 10:28
  - 2. Abraham may have a body now, Mark 12:26-27; Luke 16:23
  - 3. Moses and Elijah have a physical body at the transfiguration, Matt. 17
  - 4. Paul asserts that at the Second Coming the souls with Christ will get their new bodies first, II Thess. 4:13-18
  - 5. Paul asserts that believers get their new spiritual bodies on Resurrection Day, I Cor. 15:23,52
  - 6. Paul asserts that believers do not go to *Hades*, but at death are with Jesus, II Cor. 5:6,8; Phil. 1:23. Jesus overcame death and took the righteous to heaven with Him, I Pet. 3:18-22.

### IV. Heaven

- A. This term is used in three senses in the Bible.
  - 1. the atmosphere above the earth, Gen. 1:1,8; Isa. 42:5; 45:18
  - 2. the starry heavens, Gen. 1:14; Deut. 10:14; Ps. 148:4; Heb. 4:14; 7:26
  - 3. the place of God’s throne, Deut. 10:14; I Kgs. 8:27; Ps. 148:4; Eph. 4:10; Heb. 9:24 (third heaven, II Cor. 12:2)
- B. The Bible does not reveal much about the afterlife. Probably because fallen humans have no way or capacity to understand (cf. I Cor. 2:9).
- C. Heaven is both a place (cf. John 14:2-3) and a person (cf. II Cor. 5:6,8). Heaven may be a restored Garden of Eden (Gen. 1-2; Rev. 21-22). The earth will be cleansed and restored (cf. Acts 3:21; Rom. 8:21; II Pet. 3:10). The image of God (Gen. 1:26-27) is restored in Christ. Now the intimate fellowship of the Garden of Eden is possible again.

However, this may be metaphorical (heaven as a huge, cubed city of Rev. 21:9-27) and not literal. I Corinthians 15 describes the difference between the physical body and the spiritual body as the seed to the mature plant. Again I Cor. 2:9 (a quote from Isa. 64:4 and 65:17) is a great promise and hope! I know that when we see Him we will be like Him (cf. I John 3:2).

### V. Helpful resources

- A. William Hendriksen, *The Bible On the Life Hereafter*
- B. Maurice Rawlings, *Beyond Death’s Door*

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: THE DEMONIC (UNCLEAN SPIRIT)

- A. Ancient peoples were animists. They attributed personality to forces of nature, animals, natural objects, and traits of human personality. Life is explained through the interaction of these spiritual entities with mankind.
- B. This personification became polytheism (many gods). Usually the demonic (*genii*) were lesser gods or demigods (good or evil) that impacted individual human lives.
  - 1. Mesopotamia, chaos and conflict
  - 2. Egypt, order and function
  - 3. Canaan, see W. F. Albright’s *Archaeology and the Religion of Israel*, Fifth Edition, pp. 67-92
- C. The OT does not dwell on or develop the subject of lesser gods, angels, or the demonic, probably because of its strict monotheism (cf. Exod. 8:10; 9:14; 15:11; Deut. 4:35,39; 6:4; 33:26; Ps. 35:10; 71:19; 86:6; Isa. 46:9; Jer. 10:6-7; Mic. 7:18). It does mention the false gods of the pagan nations (*Shedim*, cf. Deut. 32:17; Ps. 106:37) and it does name some of them.
  - 1. *Se’im* (satyrs or hair demons, cf. Lev. 17:7; II Chr. 11:15)
  - 2. *Lilith* (female, a seducing demon, cf. Isa. 34:14)
  - 3. *Mavet* (Hebrew term for death used for Canaanite god of the underworld, *Mot*, cf. Isa. 28:15,18; Jer. 9:21; and possibly Deut. 28:22)
  - 4. *Resheph* (plague, cf. Deut. 33:29; Ps. 78:48; Hab. 3:5)
  - 5. *Dever* (pestilence, cf. Ps. 91:5-6; Hab. 3:5)
  - 6. *Az’azel* (name uncertain, but possibly a desert demon or place name, cf. Lev. 16:8,10,26)(These examples are taken from *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, vol. 5, p. 1523.)

However, there is no dualism or angelic independence from YHWH in the OT. Satan is a servant of YHWH (cf. Job 1-3; Zech. 3), not an enemy (cf. A. B. Davidson, *A Theology of the Old Testament*, pp. 300-306).
- D. Judaism developed during the Babylonian exile (586-538 B.C.) And was theologically influenced by the Persian personified dualism of Zoroastrianism, a good high god called *Mazda* or *Ormazd* and an evil opponent called *Ahriman*. This allowed within post-exilic Judaism the personified dualism between YHWH and His angels and Satan and his angels or demons.

Judaism’s theology of personified evil is explained and documented well in Alfred Edersheim’s *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*,

vol. 2, appendix XIII (pp. 749-863) and XVI (pp. 770-776). Judaism personified evil in three ways.

1. Satan or Sammael
2. the evil intent (*yetzer hara*) within mankind
3. the Death Angel

Edersheim characterizes these as (1) the Accuser; (2) the Tempter; and (3) the Punisher (vol. 2, p. 756). There is a marked theological difference between post-exilic Judaism and the NT presentation and explanation of evil.

- E. The NT, especially the Gospels, asserts the existence and opposition of evil spiritual beings to humanity and to YHWH (in Judaism Satan was an enemy to mankind, but not to God). They oppose God's will, rule, and kingdom. Jesus confronted and expelled these demonic beings (also called (1) unclean spirits (cf. Luke 4:36; 6:18) or (2) evil spirits (cf. Luke 7:21; 8:2) from human beings. Jesus clearly made a distinction between illness (physical and mental) and the demonic. He demonstrated His power and spiritual insight by recognizing and exorcizing these evil spirits. They often recognized Him and attempted to address Him, but Jesus rejected their testimony, demanded their silence, and expelled them. Exorcisms are a sign of the defeat of Satan's kingdom. There is a surprising lack of information in the NT Apostolic letters on this subject. Exorcism is never listed as a spiritual gift nor is a methodology or procedure given for future generations of ministers or believers.
- F. Evil is real; evil is personal; evil is present. Neither its origin nor purpose is revealed. The Bible asserts its reality and aggressively opposes its influence. There is no ultimate dualism in reality. God is in total control; evil is defeated and judged and will be removed from creation.
- G. God's people must resist evil (cf. James 4:7). They cannot be controlled by it (cf. I John 5:18), but they can be tempted and their witness and influence damaged (cf. Eph. 6:10-18). Evil is a revealed part of the Christian's world-view. Modern Christians have no right to redefine evil (the demythologizing of Rudolf Bultmann); depersonalize evil (the social structures of Paul Tillich), nor attempt to explain it completely in psychological terms (Sigmund Freud), but its influence is pervasive, but defeated. Believers need to walk in the victory of Christ!

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: DESTRUCTION (*APOLLUMI*)

This term has a wide semantic field, which has caused great confusion in relation to the theological concepts of eternal judgment vs. annihilation. The basic literal meaning is from *apo* plus *ollumi*, to ruin, to destroy.

The problem comes in this term's figurative usages. This can be clearly seen in Louw and Nida's *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, Based On Semantic Domains*, vol. 2, p. 30. It lists several meanings of this term.

1. destroy (ex. Matt. 10:28; Luke 5:37; John 10:10; 17:12; Acts 5:37; Rom. 9:22 from vol. 1, p. 232)
2. fail to obtain (ex. Matt. 10:42, vol. 1, p. 566)
3. lose (ex. Luke 15:8, vol. 1, p. 566)
4. unaware of location (ex. Luke 15:4, vol. 1, p. 330)
5. die (ex. Matt. 10:39, vol. 1, p. 266)

Gerhard Kittel, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 1, p. 394, tries to delineate the different usages by listing four meanings.

1. to destroy or kill (ex. Matt. 2:13; 27:20; Mark 3:6; 9:22; Luke 6:9; I Cor. 1:19)
2. to lose or suffer loss from (ex. Mark 9:41; Luke 15:4,8)
3. to perish (ex. Matt. 26:52; Mark 4:38; Luke 11:51; 13:3,5,33; 15:17; John 6:12,27; I Cor. 10:9-10)
4. to be lost (ex. Matt. 5:29-30; Mark 2:22; Luke 15: 4,6,24,32; 21:18; Acts 27:34)

Kittel then says

"in general we may say that #2 and #4 underlie statements relating to this world as in the Synoptics, whereas #1 and #3 underlie those relating to the next world, as in Paul and John" (p. 394).

Herein lies the confusion. The term has such a wide semantic usage that different NT authors use it in a variety of ways. I like Robert B. Girdlestone, *Synonyms of the Old Testament*, pp. 275-277. He relates the term to those humans who are morally destroyed and waiting eternal separation from God versus those humans who know Christ and have eternal life in Him. The latter group is "saved," while the former group is destroyed.

I personally do not think that this term denotes annihilation. The term "eternal" is used of both eternal punishment and eternal life in Matt. 25:46. To depreciate one is to depreciate both!

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: THE DISCIPLES' TWO QUESTIONS OF MATTHEW 24:3 (by F. F. Bruce in *Answers to Questions*, p 57).

- A. A warning against being misled, by false prophets or great calamities, into thinking that this is the end
1. Matt. 24:4-8

2. Mark 13:5-8
3. Luke 21:8-11
- B. A prediction of persecution and promise of help
  1. Matt. 24:9-14
  2. Mark 13:9-13
  3. Luke 21:12-19
- C. An answer to the first question, relating to the destruction of Jerusalem and the scattering of its inhabitants
  1. Matt. 24:15-28
  2. Mark 13:14-23
  3. Luke 21:20-24
- D. An answer to the second question, describing the coming of Christ
  1. Matt. 24:29-31
  2. Mark 13:24-27
  3. Luke 21:20-24
- E. An exhortation to watchfulness in the situation leading up to the fall of Jerusalem
  1. Matt. 24:32-35
  2. Mark 13:28-31
  3. Luke 21:29-33
- F. An exhortation to watchfulness for the coming of Christ
  1. Matt. 24:36-44
  2. Mark 13:32-37
  3. Luke 21:34-36

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## **SPECIAL TOPIC: THE DIVISIONS OF THE HEBREW BIBLE**

- I. The Law (Torah)
  - A. Genesis
  - B. Exodus
  - C. Leviticus
  - D. Numbers
  - E. Deuteronomy
- II. The Prophets (*Nevi'im*)
  - A. Former Prophets
    1. Joshua
    2. Judges
    3. I & II Samuel
    4. I & II Kings
  - B. Latter Prophets
    1. Isaiah
    2. Jeremiah
    3. Ezekiel
    4. The Twelve
 

a. Hosea	g. Nahum
b. Joel	h. Habakkuk
c. Amos	i. Zephaniah
d. Obadiah	j. Haggai
e. Jonah	k. Zechariah
f. Micah	l. Malachi
- III. The Writings (*Kethubim*)
  - A. Festival Books (*megilloth*)
    1. Ruth (read at Pentecost)
    2. Song of Songs (read at Passover)
    3. Ecclesiastes (read at Feast of Booths)
    4. Lamentations (read at day to remember the fall of Jerusalem)
    5. Esther (read at Purim)

- B. Wisdom Books
  - 1. Job
  - 2. Psalms
  - 3. Proverbs
- C. Historical Books
  - 1. Ezra
  - 2. Nehemiah
  - 3. Chronicles
  - 4. Daniel

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## **SPECIAL TOPIC: EDIFY**

This term *oikodomeō* and its other forms are used often by Paul. Literally it means “to build a house” (cf. Matt. 7:24), but it came to be used metaphorically for:

- 1. Christ’s body, the church, I Cor. 3:9; Eph. 2:21; 4:16;
- 2. building up
  - a. weak brothers, Rom. 15:1
  - b. neighbors, Rom. 15:2
  - c. one another, Eph. 4:29; I Thess. 5:11
  - d. the saints for ministry, Eph. 4:11
- 3. we build up or edify by
  - a. love, I Cor. 8:1; Eph. 4:16
  - b. limiting personal freedoms, I Cor. 10:23-24
  - c. avoiding speculations, I Tim. 1:4
  - d. limiting speakers in worship services (singers, teachers, prophets, tongue speakers, and interpreters), I Cor. 14:3-4,12
- 4. all things should edify
  - a. Paul’s authority, II Cor. 10:8; 12:19; 13:10
  - b. summary statements in Rom. 14:19 and I Cor. 14:26

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## **SPECIAL TOPIC: ELECTION**

Election is a wonderful doctrine. However, it is not a call to favoritism, but a call to be a channel, a tool or means of others’ redemption! In the Old Testament the term was used primarily for service; in the New Testament it is used primarily for salvation which issues in service. The Bible never reconciles the seeming contradiction between God’s sovereignty and mankind’s free will, but affirms them both! A good example of the biblical tension would be Romans 9 on God’s sovereign choice and Romans 10 on mankind’s necessary response (cf. 10:11,13).

The key to this theological tension may be found in Eph. 1:4. Jesus is God’s elect man and all are potentially elect in Him (Karl Barth). Jesus is God’s “yes” to fallen mankind’s need (Karl Barth). Ephesians 1:4 also helps clarify the issue by asserting that the goal of predestination is not heaven, but holiness (Christlikeness). We are often attracted to the benefits of the gospel and ignore the responsibilities! God’s call (election) is for time as well as eternity!

Doctrines come in relation to other truths, not as single, unrelated truths. A good analogy would be a constellation versus a single star. God presents truth in eastern, not western, genres. We must not remove the tension caused by dialectical (paradoxical) pairs of doctrinal truths (God as transcendent versus God as immanent. Ex.: Security vs. perseverance; Jesus as equal with the Father vs. Jesus as subservient to the Father; Christian freedom vs. Christian responsibility to a covenant partner; etc.).

The theological concept of “covenant” unites the sovereignty of God (who always takes the initiative and sets the agenda) with a mandatory initial and continuing repentant, faith response from man (cf. Mark 1:15; Acts 3:16,19; 20:21). Be careful of proof-texting one side of the paradox and depreciating the other! Be careful of asserting only your favorite doctrine or system of theology!

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## **SPECIAL TOPIC: ELECTION/PREDESTINATION AND THE NEED FOR A THEOLOGICAL BALANCE**

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## **SPECIAL TOPIC: END OR FULL (*TELOS*)**

This culmination of spiritual things is a recurrent theme in Hebrews.

1. *telos* end, fulfillment (3:6,14; 6:8,11)
2. *teleiōo*
  - a. (Jesus) to perfect the author of their salvation through suffering (cf. 2:10)
  - b. (Jesus) having been made perfect through suffering (cf. 5:8-9)
  - c. the Law made nothing perfect (cf. 7:19)
  - d. a Son, made perfect forever (cf. 7:28)
  - e. make the worshiper perfect (cf. 9:9)
  - f. make perfect those who draw near (cf. 10:1)
  - g. He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified (cf. 10:14)
  - h. apart from us they should not be made perfect (cf. 11:40)
  - i. the spirit of righteous men made perfect (cf. 12:23)
3. *teleios*, the mature (cf. 5:14)
4. *teleios*, more perfect tabernacle (cf. 9:11)
5. *teleiōtēs*, press on to maturity (cf. 6:1)
6. *teleiōsis*, if perfection was through the Levitical priesthood (cf. 7:11)
7. *teleiōtēs*, the author and perfecter of the faith (cf. 12:2)

Jesus brings the maturity and completion that the Mosaic Covenant could never do!

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## **SPECIAL TOPIC: EFFECTIVE PRAYER**

- A. Related to one's personal relationship with the Triune God
  1. Related to the Father's will
    - a. Matt. 6:10
    - b. I John 3:22
    - c. I John 5:14-15
  2. Abiding in Jesus  
John 15:7
  3. Praying in Jesus' name
    - a. John 14:13,14

- b. John 15:16
  - c. John 16:23-24
- 4. Praying in the Spirit
  - a. Eph. 6:18
  - b. Jude 20
- B. Related to one's personal motives
  - 1. Not wavering
    - a. Matt. 21:22
    - b. James 1:6-7
  - 2. Asking amiss
    - James 4:3
  - 3. Asking selfishly
    - James 4:2-3
- C. Related to one's personal choices
  - 1. Perseverance
    - a. Luke 18:1-8
    - b. Colossians 4:2
    - c. James 5:16
  - 2. Discord at home
    - I Peter 3:7
  - 3. Sin
    - a. Psalm 66:18
    - b. Isaiah 59:1-2
    - c. Isaiah 64:7

All prayer is answered, but not all prayer is effective. Prayer is a two-way relationship. The worst thing God could do is grant believers' inappropriate requests.

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: ESCHATOLOGY

Why do Christians Have So Many Dogmatic Interpretations of Revelation?

(This is taken from Dr. Utley's commentary on Revelation, vol. 12, 1998.)

Through the years of my study of eschatology I have learned that most Christians do not have or want a developed, systematized, end-time chronology. There are some Christians who focus or major on this area of Christianity for theological, psychological, or denominational reasons. These Christians seem to become obsessed with how it will all end, and somehow miss the urgency of the gospel! Believers cannot affect God's eschatological (end-time) agenda, but they can participate in the soteriological (the doctrine of salvation) mandate (cf. Matt. 28:19-20). Most believers affirm a Second Coming of Christ and an in-time culmination of the promises of God. The interpretive problems arising from how to understand this temporal culmination come from several sources:

1. the tension between Old Covenant prophetic models and New Covenant apostolic models
2. the tension between the Bible's monotheism (one God for all) and the election of Israel (a special people)
3. the tension between the conditional aspect of biblical covenants and promises ("if. . .then") and the unconditional faithfulness of God to fallen mankind's redemption
4. the tension between Near Eastern literary genres and modern western literary models
5. the tension between the Kingdom of God as present, yet future
6. the tension between belief in the imminent return of Christ and the belief that some events must happen first

Let us discuss these tensions one at a time.

### FIRST TENSION: The tension between Old Covenant prophetic models and New Covenant apostolic models.

The OT prophets predict a restoration of a Jewish kingdom in Palestine centered in Jerusalem where all the nations of the earth gather to praise and serve a Davidic ruler, but the NT Apostles never focus on this agenda. Is not the OT inspired (cf. Matt. 5:17-19)? Have the NT authors omitted crucial end-time events?

There are several sources of information about the end of the world:

1. OT prophets
2. OT apocalyptic writers (cf. Ezek. 37-39; Dan. 7-12)
3. intertestamental, non-canonical Jewish apocalyptic writers (like I Enoch)
4. Jesus Himself (cf. Matt. 24; Mark 13; Luke 21)

5. the writings of Paul (cf. I Cor. 15; II Cor. 5; I Thess. 4; II Thess. 2)
6. the writings of John (the book of Revelation).

Do these all clearly teach an end-time agenda (events, chronology, persons)? If not, why? Are they not all inspired (except the Jewish intertestamental writings)?

The Spirit revealed truths to the OT writers in terms and categories they could understand. However, through progressive revelation the Spirit has expanded these OT eschatological concepts to a universal scope.

1. The city of Jerusalem is used as a metaphor of the people of God (Zion) and is projected into the NT as a term expressing God's acceptance of all repentant, believing humans (the new Jerusalem of Revelation 20-22). The theological expansion of a literal, physical city into the people of God is foreshadowed in God's promise to redeem fallen mankind in Gen. 3:15, before there even were any Jews or a Jewish capital city. Even Abraham's call (cf. Gen. 12:3) involved the Gentiles.
2. In the OT the enemies are the surrounding nations of the ancient Near East, but in the NT they have been expanded to all unbelieving, anti-God, Satanically-inspired people. The battle has moved from a geographical, regional conflict to a cosmic conflict.
3. The promise of a land which is so integral in the OT (the Patriarchal promises) has now become the whole earth. New Jerusalem comes to a recreated earth, not the Near East only or exclusively (cf. Rev. 20-22).
4. Some other examples of OT prophetic concepts being expanded are (1) the seed of Abraham is now the spiritually circumcised (cf. Rom. 2:28-29); (2) the covenant people now include Gentiles (cf. Hos. 1:9; 2:23; Rom. 9:24-26; also Lev. 26:12; Exod. 29:45; II Cor. 6:16-18 and Exod. 19:5; Deut. 14:2; Titus 2:14); (3) the temple is now the local church (cf. I Cor. 3:16) or the individual believer (cf. I Cor. 6:19); and (4) even Israel and its characteristic descriptive phrases now refer to the whole people of God (cf. Gal. 6:16; I Pet. 2:5, 9-10; Rev. 1:6).

The prophetic model has been fulfilled and expanded, and is now more inclusive. Jesus and the Apostolic writers do not present the end-time in the same way as the OT prophets (cf. Martin Wyngaarden, *The Future of The Kingdom in Prophecy and Fulfillment*). Modern interpreters who try to make the OT model literal or normative twist the Revelation into a very Jewish book and force meaning into atomized, ambiguous phrases of Jesus and Paul! The NT writers do not negate the OT prophets, but show their ultimate universal implication. There is no organized, logical system to Jesus' or Paul's eschatology. Their purpose is primarily redemptive or pastoral.

However, even within the NT there is tension. There is no clear systemization of eschatological events. In many ways the Revelation surprisingly uses OT allusions, instead of the teachings of Jesus, in describing the end (cf. Matt. 24; Mark 13)! It follows the literary genre developed during the intertestamental period (Jewish apocalyptic literature). This may have been John's way of linking the Old and New Covenants. It shows the age-old pattern of human rebellion and God's commitment to redemption! But it must be noted that although Revelation uses OT language, persons, and events, it reinterprets them in light of first century Rome.

## **SECOND TENSION: The tension between the Bible's monotheism (one God for all) and the election of Israel (a special people) .**

The biblical emphasis is on one personal, spiritual, creator-redeemer, God. The OT's uniqueness in its own day was its monotheism. All of the surrounding nations were polytheists. The oneness of God is the heart of OT revelation (cf. Deut. 6:4). Creation is a stage for the purpose of fellowship between God and mankind, made in His image and likeness (cf. Gen. 1:26-27). However, mankind rebelled, sinning against God's love, leadership, and purpose (cf. Gen. 3). God's love and purpose was so strong and sure that He promised to redeem fallen humanity (cf. Gen. 3:15)!

The tension arises when God chooses to use one man, one family, one nation to reach the rest of mankind. God's election of Abraham and the Jews as a kingdom of priests (cf. Exod. 19:4-6) caused pride instead of service, exclusion instead of inclusion. God's call of Abraham involved the blessing of all mankind (cf. Gen. 12:3). It must be remembered and emphasized that OT election was for service, not salvation. All Israel was never right with God, never eternally saved based solely on her birthright (cf. John 8:31-47), but by personal faith and obedience. Israel lost her mission, turned mandate into privilege, service into a special standing! God chose one to choose all!

## **THIRD TENSION: The tension between the conditional aspect of biblical covenants and promises ("if. . . then") and the unconditional faithfulness of God to fallen mankind's redemption.**

There is a theological tension or paradox between conditional and unconditional covenants. It is surely true that God's redemptive purpose/plan is unconditional (cf. Gen. 15:12-21). However, the human response is always conditional!

The "if. . . then" pattern appears in both OT and NT. God is faithful; mankind is unfaithful. This tension has caused much confusion. Interpreters have tended to focus on only one "horn of the dilemma," God's faithfulness or human effort, God's sovereignty or mankind's free will. Both are biblical and necessary.

This relates to eschatology, to God's OT promises to Israel. If God promises it, that settles it, yes? God is bound to His promises; His reputation is involved (cf. Ezek. 36:22-38). However, mankind is God's instrument of blessing! The unconditional and conditional covenants meet in Christ (cf. Isa. 53), not Israel! God's ultimate faithfulness lies in the redemption of all who will repent and believe, not in who was your father/mother! Christ, not Israel, is the key to all of God's covenants and promises. If there is a theological parenthesis in the Bible, it is not the Church, but Israel (cf. Gal. 3).

The world mission of redemption has passed to the Church (cf. Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 1:8). This is not to imply that God has totally rejected the Jews (cf. Rom. 9-11). There is surely, but not exclusively, a place and purpose for end-time, believing Israel (cf. Zech. 12:10).

## **FOURTH TENSION: The tension between Near Eastern literary genres and modern western literary models.**

Genre is a critical element in correctly interpreting the Bible. The Church developed in a western (Greek) cultural setting. Eastern literature is much more figurative, metaphorical, and symbolic than modern, western culture's literary models. Christians have been guilty of using their history and literary models to interpret biblical prophecy (both OT and NT). Each generation and geographical entity has used its culture, history, and literalness to interpret Revelation. Every one of them has been wrong! It is arrogant to think that modern western culture is the focus of biblical prophecy!



The genre in which the original, inspired author chooses to write is a literary contract with the reader. The book of Revelation is not historical narrative. It is a combination of letter (chapters 1-3), prophecy, and mostly apocalyptic literature. It is as wrong to make the Bible say more than the original author intended as it is to make it say less! Interpreters' arrogance and dogmatism are even more inappropriate in a book like Revelation.

The Church has never agreed on a proper interpretation. I am a dialectical (paradoxical) interpreter. My concern is for the whole Bible, not some selected part(s). The Bible's eastern mindset presents truth in tension-filled pairs. Our western trend toward propositional truth is not invalid, but unbalanced! I think it is possible to remove at least some of the impasse in interpreting Revelation by noting its changing purpose to successive generations of believers. It is obvious to most interpreters that Revelation must be interpreted in light of its own day and its genre. A historical approach to Revelation must deal with what the first readers would have, and could have, understood. In many ways modern interpreters have lost the meaning of many of the symbols of the book. Revelation's initial main thrust was to encourage persecuted believers. It showed God's control of history (as did the OT prophets); it affirmed that history is moving toward an appointed terminus, judgment, or blessing (as did the OT prophets). It affirmed, in first century Jewish apocalyptic terms, God's love, presence, power, and sovereignty!

It functions in these same theological ways to every generation of believers. It depicts the cosmic struggle of good and evil. The first century details may have been lost to us, but not the powerful, comforting truths. When modern, western interpreters try to force the details of Revelation into their contemporary history, the pattern of false interpretations continues!

It is quite possible that the details of the book may become strikingly literal again (as did the OT in relation to the life of Christ) for the last generation of believers as they face the onslaught of an anti-God leader (cf. II Thess. 2) and culture. No one can know these literal fulfillments of the Revelation until the words of Jesus (cf. Matt. 24; Mark.13; Luke 21) and Paul (cf. II Thess. 2) also become historically evident. Guessing, speculation, and dogmatism are all inappropriate. Apocalyptic literature allows this flexibility. Thank God for images and symbols that surpass historical narrative! God is in control; He reigns; He comes!

Most modern commentaries miss the point of the genre! Modern western interpreters often seek a clear, logical system of theology rather than being fair with an ambiguous, symbolic, dramatic genre of Jewish apocalyptic literature. This truth is expressed well by Ralph P. Martin in his article, "Approaches to New Testament Exegesis," in the book *New Testament Interpretation*, edited by J. Howard Marshall:

"Unless we recognize the dramatic quality of this writing and recall the way in which language is being used as a vehicle to express religious truth, we shall grievously err in our understanding of the Apocalypse, and mistakenly try to interpret its visions as though it were a book of literal prose and concerned to describe events of empirical and datable history. To attempt the latter course is to run into all manner of problems of interpretation. More seriously it leads to a distortion of the essential meaning of apocalyptic and so misses the great value of this part of the New Testament as a dramatic assertion in mythopoetic language of the sovereignty of God in Christ and the paradox of his rule which blends might and love (cf. 5:5,6; the Lion is the Lamb)" (p. 235).

W. Randolph Tate in his book *Biblical Interpretations* says:

"No other genre of the Bible has been so fervently read with such depressing results as apocalypse, especially the books of Daniel and Revelation. This genre had suffered from a disastrous history of misinterpretation due to a fundamental misunderstanding of its literary forms, structure, and purpose. Because of its very claim to reveal what is shortly to happen, apocalypse has been viewed as a road map into and a blueprint of the future. The tragic flaw in this view is the assumption that the books' frame of reference is the reader's contemporary age rather than the author's. This misguided approach to apocalypse (particularly Revelation) treats the work as if it were a cryptogram by which contemporary events can be used to interpret the symbol of the text. . .First, the interpreter must recognize that apocalyptic communicates its messages through symbolism. To interpret a symbol literally when it is metaphoric is simply to misinterpret. The issue is not whether the events in apocalyptic are historical. The events may be historical; they may have really happened, or might happen, but the author presents events and communicates meaning through images and archetypes" (p. 137).

From *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*, edited by Ryken, Wilhoit and Longman III:

"Today's readers are often puzzled and frustrated by this genre. The unexpected imagery and out-of-this-world experiences seem bizarre and out of sync with most of Scripture. Taking this literature at face value leaves many readers scrambling to determine 'what will happen when,' thus missing the intent of the apocalyptic message" (p. 35).

#### **FIFTH TENSION: The tension between the Kingdom of God as present, yet future.**

The kingdom of God is both present, yet future. This theological paradox becomes focused at the point of eschatology. If one expects a literal fulfillment of all OT prophecies to Israel then the Kingdom becomes mostly a restoration of Israel to a geographical locality and a theological pre-eminence! This would necessitate that the Church is secretly raptured out at chapter 5 and the remaining chapters relate to Israel.

However, if the focus is on the kingdom being present at Christ's first coming, then the focus becomes the incarnation, life, teachings, death, and resurrection of Christ. The theological emphasis is on a current salvation. The kingdom has come; the OT is fulfilled in Christ's offer of salvation to all, not His millennial reign over some!

It is surely true that the Bible speaks of both of Christ's comings, but where is the emphasis to be placed? It seems to me that most OT prophecies focus on the first coming, the establishment of the Messianic kingdom (cf. Dan. 2). In many ways this is analogous to the eternal reign of God (cf. Dan. 7) and the millennial reign of Christ (cf. Rev. 20). In the OT the focus is on the eternal reign of God, yet the mechanism for that reign's manifestation is the ministry of the Messiah (cf. I Cor. 15:26-27). It is not a question of which is true; both are true, but where is the emphasis? It must be said that some interpreters become so focused on the millennial reign of the Messiah that they miss the biblical focus on the eternal reign of the Father. Christ's reign is a preliminary event. As the two comings of Christ were not obvious in the OT, so too, the temporal reign of the Messiah!

The key to Jesus' preaching and teaching is the kingdom of God. It is both present (in salvation and service), and future (in pervasiveness and power). Revelation, if it focuses on a Messianic millennial reign (cf. Rev. 20), is preliminary, not ultimate (cf. Rev. 21-22). It is not obvious from the OT that a temporal reign is necessary; as a matter of fact, the Messianic reign of Daniel 7 is eternal, not millennial.

#### **SIXTH TENSION: The tension between belief in the imminent return of Christ and the belief that some events must happen first.**

Most believers have been taught that Jesus is coming soon, suddenly, and unexpectedly (cf. Matt. 10:23; 24:27,34,44; Mark 9:1; 13:30). But



every generation so far has been wrong! The soonness (immediacy) of Jesus' return is a powerful promised hope of every generation, but a reality to only one (and that one a persecuted one). Believers must live as if He was coming tomorrow, but plan and implement the Great Commission (cf. Matt. 28:19-20) as if He tarries.

Some passages in the Gospels (cf. Mark 13:10; Luke 17:2; 18:8) and I and II Thessalonians are based on a delayed Second Coming (*Parousia*). There are some historical events that must happen first:

1. world-wide evangelization (cf. Matt. 24:15; Mark 13:10)
2. the revelation of "the man of Sin" (cf. Matt. 24:15; II Thess. 2; Rev.13)
3. the great persecution (cf. Matt. 24:21,24; Rev. 13)

There is a purposeful ambiguity (cf. Matt. 24:42-51; Mark 13:32-36)! Live every day as if it were your last but plan and train for future ministry!

## CONSISTENCY AND BALANCE

The different schools of modern eschatological interpretation all contain half truths. They explain and interpret some texts well. The problem lies in consistency and balance. Often there is a set of presuppositions which use the biblical text to fill in the pre-set theological skeleton. The Bible does not reveal a logical, chronological, systematic eschatology. It is like a family album. The pictures are true, but not always in order, in context, in a logical sequence. Some of the pictures have fallen out of the album and later generations of family members do not know exactly how to put them back. The key to proper interpretation of Revelation is the intent of the original author as revealed in his choice of literary genre. Most interpreters try to carry their exegetical tools and procedures from other genres of the NT into their interpretations of Revelation. They focus on the OT instead of allowing the teachings of Jesus and Paul to set the theological structure and let Revelation act as illustrative.

I must admit that I approach this commentary with some fear and trepidation, not because of Rev. 22:18-19, but because of the level of controversy the interpretation of this book has caused and continues to cause among God's people. I love God's revelation. It is true when all men are liars (cf. Rom. 3:4)! Please use this commentary as an attempt to be thought provoking and not definitive, as a sign post and not a road map, as a "what if," not a "thus says the Lord." I have come face to face with my own inadequacies, biases, and theological agenda. I have also seen those of other interpreters. It almost seems that people find in Revelation what they expect to find. The genre lends itself to abuse! However, it is in the Bible for a purpose. Its placement as the concluding "word" is not by accident. It has a message from God to His children of each and every generation. God wants us to understand! Let us join hands, not form camps; let us affirm what is clear and central, not all that may be, might be, could be true. God help us all!

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: NEW TESTAMENT EVIDENCE FOR ONE'S SALVATION

It is based on

1. The character of the Father (cf. John 3:16), the work of the Son (cf. II Cor. 5:21), and the ministry of the Spirit (cf. Rom. 8:14-16) not on human performance, not wages due for obedience, not just a creed
2. It is a gift (cf. Rom. 3:24; 6:23; Eph. 2:5,8-9)
3. It is a new life, a new world-view (cf. James and I John)
4. It is knowledge (the gospel), fellowship (faith in and with Jesus), and a new lifestyle (spirit-led Christlikeness) all three, not just any one by itself

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: FAITH (*PISTIS* [noun], *PISTEUŌ*, [verb], *PISTOS* [adjective])

- A. This is such an important term in the Bible (cf. Heb. 11:1,6). It is the subject of Jesus' early preaching (cf. Mark 1:15). There are at least two new covenant requirements: repentance and faith (cf. 1:15; Acts 3:16,19; 20:21).
- B. Its etymology
  1. The term "faith" in the OT meant loyalty, fidelity, or trustworthiness and was a description of God's nature, not ours.
  2. It came from a Hebrew term (*emun*, *emunah*) which meant "to be sure or stable." Saving faith is mental assent (set of truths), moral living (a lifestyle), and primarily a relational (welcoming of a person) and volitional commitment (a decision) to that person.
- C. Its OT usage

It must be emphasized that Abraham's faith was not in a future Messiah, but in God's promise that he would have a child and descendants (cf. Gen. 12:2; 15:2-5; 17:4-8; 18:14). Abraham responded to this promise by trusting in God. He still had doubts and problems about this promise, which took thirteen years to be fulfilled. His imperfect faith, however, was accepted by God. God is willing to work with flawed human beings who respond to Him and His promises in faith, even if it is the size of a mustard seed (cf. Matt. 17:20).
- D. Its NT usage

The term "believed" is from the Greek term (*pisteuō*) which can also be translated "believe," "faith," or "trust." For example, the noun does

not occur in the Gospel of John, but the verb is used often. In John 2:23-25 there is uncertainty as to the genuineness of the crowd's commitment to Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah. Other examples of this superficial use of the term "believe" are in John 8:31-59 and Acts 8:13, 18-24. True biblical faith is more than an initial response. It must be followed by a process of discipleship (cf. Matt. 13:20-22,31-32).

#### E. Its use with PREPOSITIONS

1. *eis* means "into." This unique construction emphasizes believers putting their trust/faith in Jesus
  - a. into His name (John 1:12; 2:23; 3:18; I John 5:13)
  - b. into Him (John 2:11; 3:15,18; 4:39; 6:40; 7:5,31,39,48; 8:30; 9:36; 10:42; 11:45,48; 17:37,42; Matt. 18:6; Acts 10:43; Phil. 1:29; I Pet. 1:8)
  - c. into Me (John 6:35; 7:38; 11:25,26; 12:44,46; 14:1,12; 16:9; 17:20)
  - d. into the Son (John 3:36; 9:35; I John 5:10)
  - e. into Jesus (John 12:11; Acts 19:4; Gal. 2:16)
  - f. into Light (John 12:36)
  - g. into God (John 14:1)
2. *en* means "in" as in John 3:15; Mark 1:15; Acts 5:14
3. *epi* means "in" or upon, as in Matt. 27:42; Acts 9:42; 11:17; 16:31; 22:19; Rom. 4:5,24; 9:33; 10:11; I Tim. 1:16; I Pet. 2:6
4. the DATIVE CASE with no PREPOSITION as in Gal. 3:6; Acts 18:8; 27:25; I John 3:23; 5:10
5. *hoti*, which means "believe that," gives content as to what to believe
  - a. Jesus is the Holy One of God (John 6:69)
  - b. Jesus is the I Am (John 8:24)
  - c. Jesus is in the Father and the Father is in Him (John 10:38)
  - d. Jesus is the Messiah (John 11:27; 20:31)
  - e. Jesus is the Son of God (John 11:27; 20:31)
  - f. Jesus was sent by the Father (John 11:42; 17:8,21)
  - g. Jesus is one with the Father (John 14:10-11)
  - h. Jesus came from the Father (John 16:27,30)
  - i. Jesus identified Himself in the covenant name of the Father, "I Am" (John 8:24; 13:19)
  - j. We will live with Him (Rom. 6:8)
  - k. Jesus died and rose again (I Thess. 4:14)

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### **SPECIAL TOPIC: DOES ANY BELIEVER EVERY FALL AWAY (i.e. APOSTASY)?**

The theology question is were these ever believers? Often our theological or denominational traditions answer this question without reference to specific Bible texts (except the proof-text method of quoting a verse out of context to supposedly prove one's bias).

There are persons in the Bible who are involved in the people of God and something happens.

#### I. Old Testament

- A. Korah, Num. 16
- B. Eli's sons, I Sam. 2, 4
- C. Saul, I Sam. 11-31
- D. False prophets (examples)
  1. Deut. 13:1-5 18:19-22
  2. Jeremiah 28
  3. Ezekiel 13:1-7
- E. False prophetesses
  1. Ezekiel 13:17
  2. Nehemiah 6:14
- F. Evil leaders of Israel (examples)
  1. Jeremiah 5:30-31; 8:1-2; 23:1-4
  2. Ezekiel 22:23-31
  3. Micah 3:5-12

#### II. New Testament

- A. Apparent faith
  1. Judas, John 17:12
  2. Simon Magnus, Acts 8
  3. Those spoken of in Matt. 7:21-23

4. Those spoken of in Matt. 13
  5. Alexander and Hymenaeus, I Tim. 1:19-20
  6. Hymenaeus and Philetus, II Tim. 2:16-18
  7. Demas, II Tim. 4:10
  8. False teachers, II Peter 2:19-20; Jude 12-19
  9. Antichrists, I John 2:18-19
- B. Fruitless faith
1. Matthew 7
  2. I Corinthians 3:10-15
  3. II Peter 1:8-11

We rarely think about these texts because our systematic theology (Calvinism, Arminianism, etc). dictates the mandated response. Please do not pre-judge me because I bring up this subject. My concern is proper hermeneutical procedure. We must let the Bible speak to us and not try to mold it into a preset theology. This is often painful and shocking because much of our theology is denominational, cultural or relational (parent, friend, pastor), not biblical. Some who are in the People of God turn out to not be in the People of God (e.g. Rom. 9:6).

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: FATHER

The OT introduces the intimate familial metaphor of God as Father: (1) the nation of Israel is often described as YHWH's "son" (cf. Hos. 11:1; Mal. 3:17); (2) even earlier in Deuteronomy the analogy of God as Father is used (1:31); (3) in Deut. 32 Israel is called "his children" and God is called "your father"; (4) this analogy is stated in Ps. 103:13 and developed in Ps. 68:5 (the father of orphans); and (5) it was common in the prophets (cf. Isa. 1:2; 63:8; Israel as son, God as Father, 63:16; 64:8; Jer. 3:4,19; 31:9).

Jesus spoke Aramaic, which means that many of the places where "Father" appears as the Greek *Pater* may reflect the Aramaic *Abba* (cf. 14:36). This familial term "Daddy" or "Papa" reflects Jesus' intimacy with the Father; His revealing this to His followers also encourages our own intimacy with the Father. The term "Father" was used sparingly in the OT for YHWH, but Jesus uses it often and pervasively. It is a major revelation of believers' new relationship with God through Christ (cf. Matt. 6:9).

It must be remembered that Father is a metaphor of family, not of generation or previous existence. There has never been a time when God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit were not together and of one essence!

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: FASTING

Fasting, though never commanded in the NT, was expected at the appropriate time for Jesus' disciples (cf. Matt. 6:16,17; 9:15; Mark 2:19; Luke 5:35). Proper fasting is described in Isa. 58. Jesus set the precedent Himself (cf. Matt. 4:2). The early church fasted (cf. Acts 13:2-3; 14:23; II Cor. 6:5; 11:27). The motive and manner are crucial; the timing; the length and frequency are optional. OT fasting is not a requirement for NT believers (cf. Acts 15:19-29). Fasting is not a way of showing off one's spirituality, but of drawing closer to God and seeking His guidance. It can be spiritually helpful.

The early church's tendencies toward asceticism caused scribes to insert "fasting" in several passages (i.e. Matt. 17:21; Mark 9:29; Acts 10:30; I Cor. 7:5). For further information on these questionable texts consult Bruce Metzger's *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, published by United Bible Societies.

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: FIRE

Fire has both positive and negative connotations in Scripture.

- A. Positive
1. warms (cf. Isa. 44:15; John 18:18)
  2. lights (cf. Isa. 50:11; Matt. 25:1-13)
  3. cooks (cf. Exod. 12:8; Isa. 44:15-16; John 21:9)
  4. purifies (cf. Num. 31:22-23; Prov. 17:3; Isa. 1:25; 6:6-8; Jer. 6:29; Mal. 3:2-3)

5. holiness (cf. Gen. 15:17; Exod. 3:2; 19:18; Ezek. 1:27; Heb. 12:29)
  6. God's leadership (cf. Exod. 12:21; Num. 14:14; I Kgs. 18:24)
  7. God's empowering (cf. Acts 2:3)
- B. Negative
1. burns (cf. Josh. 6:24; 8:8; 11:11; Matt. 22:7)
  2. destroys (cf. Gen. 19:24; Lev. 10:1-2)
  3. anger (cf. Num. 21:28; Isa. 10:16; Zech. 12:6)
  4. punishment (cf. Gen. 38:24; Lev. 20:14; 21:9; Josh. 7:15)
  5. false eschatological sign (cf. Rev. 13:13)
- C. God's anger against sin is expressed in fire metaphors
1. His anger burns (cf. Hos. 8:5; Zeph. 3:8)
  2. He pours out fire (cf. Nah. 1:6)
  3. eternal fire (cf. Jer. 15:14; 17:4)
  4. eschatological judgment (cf. Matt. 3:10; 13:40; John 15:6; II Thess. 1:7; II Pet. 3:7-10; Rev. 8:7; 13:13; 16:8)
- D. Like so many metaphors in the Bible (i.e. leaven, lion) fire can be a blessing or a curse depending on the context.

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: FORM (*TUPOS*)

The word *tupos* has a variety of uses.

1. Moulton and Milligan, *The Vocabulary of the Greek New Testament*, p. 645
  - a. pattern
  - b. plan
  - c. form or manner of writing
  - d. decree or rescript
  - e. sentence or decision
  - f. model of human body as votive offerings to the healing god
  - g. verb used in the sense of enforcing the precepts of the law
2. Louw and Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon*, vol. 2, p. 249
  - a. scar (cf. John 20:25)
  - b. image (cf. Acts 7:43)
  - c. model (cf. Heb. 8:5)
  - d. example (cf. I Cor. 10:6; Phil. 3:17)
  - e. archetype (cf. Rom. 5:14)
  - f. kind (cf. Acts 23:25)
  - g. contents (cf. Acts 23:25)
3. Harold K. Moulton, *The Analytical Greek Lexicon Revised*, p. 411
  - a. a blow, an impression, a mark (cf. John 20:25)
  - b. a delineation
  - c. an image (cf. Acts 7:43)
  - d. a formula, scheme (cf. Rom. 6:17)
  - e. form, purport (cf. Acts 23:25)
  - f. a figure, counterpart (cf. I Cor. 10:6)
  - g. an anticipative figure, type (cf. Rom. 5:14; I Cor. 10:11)
  - h. a model pattern (cf. Acts 7:44; Heb. 8:5)
  - i. a moral pattern (cf. Phil. 3:17; I Thess. 1:7; II Thess. 3:9; I Tim. 4:12; I Pet. 5:3)

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: GAMALIEL

- A. The Name
1. The name means "God is my rewarder."

2. He is known as “the elder” or Gamaliel I to distinguish him from a later relative, also very active in Jewish leadership.
- B. The Man
1. Tradition says he was the grandson of Hillel.
  2. Other traditions say he had ties to the royal family of Herod (i.e. Agrippa I).
  3. Tradition says he was president of the Sanhedrin, but this probably refers to Gamaliel II.
  4. He was one of seven highly respected rabbis who were given the title Rabban.
  5. He died before A.D. 70.
- C. His Theology
1. He was a highly respected rabbi.
  2. He was known for caring for and staying in control with the scattered Jews of the Diaspora.
  3. He was also known for his concern for the socially disenfranchised (his Takkonot often began with “for the benefit of humanity”).
    - a. orphans
    - b. widows
    - c. women
  4. He was Paul the Apostle’s rabbinical mentor in Jerusalem (cf. Acts 22:3).
  5. In Acts 5:33-39 he gives sage wisdom about how to handle the early church in Palestine.
  6. This rabbi was so highly thought of that at his death it was said, “When Rabban Gamaliel the elder died the glory of the Torah ceased and purity and saintliness (lit. ‘separation’) perished” (*Sot.* 9:15, taken from *Encyclopedia Judaica*, vol. 7, p. 296).
  7. It must be stated that Gamaliel’s motivation in this case is uncertain. He may have been asserting the wisdom of Pharisees against the impulsiveness of the Sadducees. These two powerful Jewish sects exploited each other at every opportunity!

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

- I. Old Testament
  - A. All humans go to *She’ol* (etymology uncertain), which is a way of referring to death or the grave, mostly in Wisdom Literature and Isaiah. In the OT it was a shadowy, conscious, but joyless existence (cf. Job 10:21-22; 38:17; Ps. 107:10,14).
  - B. *She’ol* characterized
    1. associated with God’s judgment (fire), Deut. 32:22
    2. associated with punishment even before Judgment Day, Ps. 18:4-5
    3. associated with *Abaddon* (destruction), but also open to God, Job 26:6; Ps. 139:8; Amos 9:2
    4. associated with “the Pit” (grave), Ps. 16:10; Isa 14:15; Ezek. 31:15-17
    5. wicked descend alive into *She’ol*, Num. 16:30,33; Ps. 55:15
    6. personified often as an animal with a large mouth, Num. 16:30; Isa. 5:14; 14:9; Hab. 2:5
    7. people there called *Shades*, Isa. 14:9-11)
- II. New Testament
  - A. The Hebrew *She’ol* is translated by the Greek *Hades* (the unseen world)
  - B. *Hades* characterized
    1. refers to death, Matt. 16:18
    2. linked to death, Rev. 1:18; 6:8; 20:13-14
    3. often analogous to the place of permanent punishment (*Gehenna*), Matt. 11:23 (OT quote); Luke 10:15; 16:23-24
    4. often analogous to the grave, Luke 16:23
  - C. Possibly divided (rabbis)
    1. righteous part called paradise (really another name for heaven, cf. II Cor. 12:4; Rev. 2:7), Luke 23:43
    2. wicked part called *Tartarus*, II Pet. 2:4, where it is a holding place for evil angels (cf. Gen. 6; I Enoch)
  - D. *Gehenna*
    1. Reflects the OT phrase, “the valley of the sons of Hinnom,” (south of Jerusalem). It was the place where the Phoenician fire god, *Molech* was worshiped by child sacrifice (cf. II Kgs. 16:3; 21:6; II Chr. 28:3; 33:6), which was forbidden in Lev. 18:21; 20:2-5
    2. Jeremiah changed it from a place of pagan worship into a site of YHWH’s judgment (cf. Jer. 7:32; 19:6-7). It became the place of fiery, eternal judgment in I Enoch 90:26-27 and Sib. 1:103.
    3. The Jews of Jesus’ day were so appalled by their ancestors’ participation in pagan worship by child sacrifice, that they turned this area into the garbage dump for Jerusalem. Many of Jesus’ metaphors for eternal judgment came from this landfill (fire, smoke, worms, stench, cf. Mark 9:44,46). The term *Gehenna* is used only by Jesus (except in James 3:6).
    4. Jesus’ usage of *Gehenna*
      - a. fire, Matt. 5:22; 18:9; Mark 9:43

- b. permanent, Mark 9:48 (Matt. 25:46)
- c. place of destruction (both soul and body), Matt. 10:28
- d. paralleled to *She'ol*, Matt. 5:29-30; 18:9
- e. characterizes the wicked as “son of hell,” Matt. 23:15
- f. result of judicial sentence, Matt. 23:33; Luke 12:5
- g. the concept of *Gehenna* is parallel to the second death (cf. Rev. 2:11; 20:6,14) or the lake of fire (cf. Matt. 13:42,50; Rev. 19:20; 20:10,14-15; 21:8). It is possible the lake of fire becomes the permanent dwelling place of humans (from *She'ol*) and evil angels (from *Tartarus*, II Pet. 2:4; Jude 6 or the abyss, cf. Luke 8:31; Rev. 9:1-10; 20:1,3).
- h. it was not designed for humans, but for Satan and his angels, Matt. 25:41

- E. It is possible, because of the overlap of *She'ol*, *Hades*, and *Gehenna* that
- 1. originally all humans went to *She'ol/Hades*
  - 2. their experience there (good or bad) is exacerbated after Judgment Day, but the place of the wicked remains the same (this is why the KJV translated *hades* (grave) as *gehenna* (hell).
  - 3. only NT text to mention torment before Judgment is the parable of Luke 16:19-31 (Lazarus and the Rich Man). *She'ol* is also described as a place of punishment now (cf. Deut. 32:22; Ps. 18:1-5). However, one can not establish a doctrine on a parable.

### III. Intermediate state between death and resurrection

- A. The NT does not teach the “immortality of the soul,” which is one of several ancient views of the after life.
- 1. human souls exist before their physical life
  - 2. human souls are eternal before and after physical death
  - 3. often the physical body is seen as a prison and death as release back to pre-existent state
- B. The NT hints at a disembodied state between death and resurrection
- 1. Jesus speaks of a division between body and soul, Matt. 10:28
  - 2. Abraham may have a body now, Mark 12:26-27; Luke 16:23
  - 3. Moses and Elijah have a physical body at the transfiguration, Matt. 17
  - 4. Paul asserts that at the Second Coming the souls with Christ will get their new bodies first, II Thess. 4:13-18
  - 5. Paul asserts that believers get their new spiritual bodies on Resurrection Day, I Cor. 15:23,52
  - 6. Paul asserts that believers do not go to *Hades*, but at death are with Jesus, II Cor. 5:6,8; Phil. 1:23. Jesus overcame death and took the righteous to heaven with Him, I Pet. 3:18-22.

### IV. Heaven

- A. This term is used in three senses in the Bible.
- 1. the atmosphere above the earth, Gen. 1:1,8; Isa. 42:5; 45:18
  - 2. the starry heavens, Gen. 1:14; Deut. 10:14; Ps. 148:4; Heb. 4:14; 7:26
  - 3. the place of God’s throne, Deut. 10:14; I Kgs. 8:27; Ps. 148:4; Eph. 4:10; Heb. 9:24 (third heaven, II Cor. 12:2)
- B. The Bible does not reveal much about the afterlife. Probably because fallen humans have no way or capacity to understand (cf. I Cor. 2:9).
- C. Heaven is both a place (cf. John 14:2-3) and a person (cf. II Cor. 5:6,8). Heaven may be a restored Garden of Eden (Gen. 1-2; Rev. 21-22). The earth will be cleansed and restored (cf. Acts 3:21; Rom. 8:21; II Pet. 3:10). The image of God (Gen. 1:26-27) is restored in Christ. Now the intimate fellowship of the Garden of Eden is possible again.
- However, this may be metaphorical (heaven as a huge, cubed city of Rev. 21:9-27) and not literal. I Corinthians 15 describes the difference between the physical body and the spiritual body as the seed to the mature plant. Again I Cor. 2:9 (a quote from Isa. 64:4 and 65:17) is a great promise and hope! I know that when we see Him we will be like Him (cf. I John 3:2).

### V. Helpful resources

- A. William Hendriksen, *The Bible On the Life Hereafter*
- B. Maurice Rawlings, *Beyond Death’s Door*

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: GLORY (*DOXA*)

The biblical concept of “glory” is difficult to define. Believers’ glory is that they understand the gospel and glory in God, not in themselves (cf. 1:29-31; Jer. 9:23-24).

In the OT the most common Hebrew word for “glory” (*kbd*) was originally a commercial term relating to a pair of scales (“to be heavy”). That which was heavy was valuable or had intrinsic worth. Often the concept of brightness was added to the word to express God’s majesty (cf. Exod. 19:16-18; 24:17; Isa. 60:1-2). He alone is worthy and honorable. He is too brilliant for fallen mankind to behold (cf. Exod 33:17-23; Isa. 6:5). YHWH can only be truly known through Christ (cf. Jer. 1:14; Matt. 17:2; Heb. 1:3; James 2:1).

The term “glory” is somewhat ambiguous: (1) it may be parallel to “the righteousness of God”; (2) it may refer to the “holiness” or “perfection” of God; or (3) it could refer to the image of God in which mankind was created (cf. Gen. 1:26-27; 5:1; 9:6), but which was later marred through



rebellion (cf. Gen. 3:1-22). It is first used of YHWH's presence with His people during the wilderness wandering period in Exod. 16:7,10; Lev. 9:23; and Num. 14:10.

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## **SPECIAL TOPIC: GLORY (APAUGASMA)**

The word "radiance" (*apaugasma*) is used only here in the NT. In Philo it was used of Christ's relationship to God in the sense that the *logos* was a reflection of deity. The early Greek church fathers used it in the sense of Christ as the reflection or effulgence of God. In a popular sense to see Jesus is to see God, as a mirror reflects the light of the full sun. The Hebrew term "glory" (*kabod*) was often used in the sense of brightness (cf. Exod. 16:10; 24:16-17; Lev. 9:6).

This phrasing may be related to Prov. 8:22-31, where "wisdom" (the term is FEMININE in both Hebrew and Greek) is personified as God's first creation (cf. *Sirach* 1:4) and agent of creation (cf. *Wisdom of Solomon* 9:9). This same concept is developed in the apocryphal book *Wisdom of Solomon* 7:15-22a and 22b-30. In v. 22 wisdom fashions all things; in v. 25 wisdom is pure emanation of the glory of the Almighty; in v. 26 wisdom is the reflection of eternal light, a spotless mirror of the working of God; in v. 29 compared with the light (i.e. sun and stars) she is found to be superior.

In the OT the most common Hebrew word for "glory" (*kabod*) was originally a commercial term (which referred to a pair of scales) which meant "to be heavy." That which was heavy was valuable or had intrinsic worth. Often the concept of brightness was added to the word to express God's majesty. He alone is worthy and honorable. He is too brilliant for fallen mankind to behold. God can only be truly known through Christ (cf. Jer. 1:14; Matt. 17:2; Heb. 1:3; James 2:1).

The term "glory" is somewhat ambiguous: (1) it may be parallel to "the righteousness of God"; (2) it may refer to the "holiness" or "perfection" of God; (3) it could refer to the image of God in which mankind was created (cf. Gen. 1:26-27; 5:1; 9:6), but which was later marred through rebellion (cf. Gen. 3:1-22).

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## **SPECIAL TOPIC: GNOSTICISM**

- A. Most of our knowledge of this heresy comes from the gnostic writings of the second century. However, its ideas were present in the first century (Dead Sea Scrolls) and the Apostle John's writings.
- B. The problem at Ephesus (I Timothy), Crete (Titus) and Colossae was a hybrid of Christianity, incipient gnosticism, and legalistic Judaism.
- C. Some tenets of Valentinian and Cerinthian Gnosticism of the second century
  - 1. Matter and spirit were co-eternal (an ontological dualism). Matter is evil, spirit is good. God, who is spirit, cannot be directly involved with molding evil matter.
  - 2. There are emanations (*eons* or angelic levels) between God and matter. The last or lowest one was YHWH of the Old Testament, who formed the universe (*kosmos*).
  - 3. Jesus was an emanation, like YHWH, but higher on the scale, closer to the true God. Some put Him as the highest, but still less than God and certainly not incarnate deity (cf. John 1:14). Since matter is evil, Jesus could not have a human body and still be divine. He appeared to be human, but was really only a spirit (cf. I John 1:1-3; 4:1-6).
  - 4. Salvation was obtained through faith in Jesus plus special knowledge, which is only known by special persons. Knowledge (passwords) was needed to pass through heavenly spheres. Jewish legalism was also required to reach God.
- D. The gnostic false teachers advocated two opposite ethical systems
  - 1. For some, lifestyle was totally unrelated to salvation. For them, salvation and spirituality were encapsulated into secret knowledge (passwords) through the angelic spheres (*eons*).
  - 2. For others, lifestyle was crucial to salvation. In this book, the false teachers emphasized an ascetic lifestyle as evidence of true salvation (cf. 2:16-23).
- E. A good reference book is *The Gnostic Religion* by Hans Jonas, published by Beacon Press.

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## **SPECIAL TOPIC: GOD'S PLAN FOR REDEMPTION, "MYSTERY"**

God has a unified purpose for mankind's redemption that even preceded the fall (cf. Gen. 3). Hints of this plan are revealed in the OT (cf. Gen.



3:15; 12:3; Exod. 19:5-6; and the universal passages in the prophets). However this full agenda was not clear (cf. I Cor. 2:6-8; Col. 1:26). With the coming of Jesus and the Spirit it begins to become more obvious. Paul used the term “mystery” to describe this total redemptive plan (cf. I Cor. 4:1; Eph. 6:19; Col. 4:3; I Tim. 1:9). However, he used it in several different senses:

1. A partial hardening of Israel to allow Gentiles to be included. This influx of Gentiles will work as a mechanism (jealousy) for Jews to accept Jesus as the Messiah of prophecy (cf. Rom. 11:25-32).
2. The gospel was made known to the nations, all of whom are included in Christ and through Christ (cf. Rom. 16:25-27; Col. 2:2).
3. Believers’ new bodies at the Second Coming (cf. I Cor. 15:5-57; I Thess. 4:13-18).
4. The summing up of all things in Christ (cf. Eph. 1:8-11)
5. The Gentiles and Jews are fellow-heirs (cf. Eph. 2:11-3:13)
6. Intimacy of the relationship between Christ and the Church described in marriage terms (cf. Eph. 5:22-33)
7. Gentiles included in the covenant people and indwelt by the Spirit of Christ so as to produce Christlike maturity, that is, restore the marred image of God in fallen humanity (cf. Gen. 1:26-27; 5:1; 6:5,11-13; 9:6; Col. 1:26-28).
8. The end time Anti-Christ (cf. II Thess. 2:1-11)
9. An early church summary of the mystery is found in I Tim. 1:16

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## **SPECIAL TOPIC: HUMAN GOVERNMENT**

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

- A. Definition - Government is humanity organizing themselves to provide and secure sensed physical needs.
- B. Purpose - God has willed that order is preferable to anarchy.
  1. The Mosaic legislation, particularly the Decalog, is God’s will for mankind in society. It balances worship and life.
  2. No form or structure of government is advocated in Scripture, although ancient Israel’s theocracy is the anticipated form of heaven. Democracy nor capitalism is a biblical truth. Christians are to act appropriately in whatever governmental system they find themselves. The purpose of the Christian is evangelism and ministry, not revolution.
- C. Origin of human government
  1. Roman Catholicism has asserted that human government is an innate need, even before the Fall. Aristotle seems to have agreed with this premise. He says, “man is a political animal” and by this he meant that government “exists for the promotion of the good life.”
  2. Protestantism, especially Martin Luther, has asserted that human government is inherent in the Fall. He calls it “the Kingdom of God’s left hand.” He said that “God’s way to control bad men is to put bad men in control.”
  3. Karl Marx has asserted that government is the means by which a few elite keep the masses under control. For him, government and religion play a similar role.

### **II. BIBLICAL MATERIAL**

- A. Old Testament
  1. Israel is the pattern which will be utilized in heaven. In ancient Israel YHWH was King. Theocracy is the term used to describe God’s direct rule (cf. I Sam. 8:4-9).
  2. God’s sovereignty in human government can be clearly seen in :
    - a. Jeremiah 27:6; Ezra 1:1
    - b. II Chronicles 36:22
    - c. Isaiah 44:28
    - d. Daniel 2:21
    - e. Daniel 2:44
    - f. Daniel 4:17,25
    - g. Daniel 5:28
  3. God’s people are to be submissive and respectful even to invading and occupying governments:
    - a. Daniel 1-4, Nebuchadnezzar
    - b. Daniel 5, Belshazzar
    - c. Daniel 6, Darius
    - d. Ezra and Nehemiah
  4. God’s people are to pray for civil authority:
    - a. Jeremiah 28:7
    - b. Mishnah, Avot. 3:2
- B. New Testament
  1. Jesus showed respect to human governments
    - a. Matthew 17:24-27; paid the Temple tax

- b. Matthew 22:15-22, advocated a place for the Roman tax and thereby Roman civil authority
  - c. John 19:11, God gives civil authority
- 2. Paul's words related to human governments
  - a. Romans 13:1-7, believers must submit to and pray for civil authorities
  - b. I Timothy 2:1-3, believers must pray for civil authorities
  - c. Titus 3:1, believers must be subject to civil authorities
- 3. Peter's words related to human governments
  - a. Acts 4:1-31; 5:29, Peter and John before the Sanhedrin (this shows civil disobedience)
  - b. I Peter 2:13-17, believers must submit to civil authorities
- 4. John's words related to human governments
  - a. Revelation 17, the whore of Babylon stands for human government opposed to God

### III. CONCLUSION

- A. Human government is ordained by God. This is not "the divine right of Kings," but the divine place of government. No one form is advocated above another.
  - B. It is a religious duty for believers to obey civil authority with a proper reverent attitude.
  - C. It is proper for believers to support human government by taxes and prayers.
  - D. Human government is for the purpose of order. They are God's servants for this task.
  - E. Human government is not ultimate. It is limited in its authority. Believers must act for their conscience's sake in rejecting civil authority when it oversteps its divinely appointed bounds. As Augustine has asserted in *The City of God*, we are citizens of two realms, one temporal and one eternal. We have responsibility in both, but God's kingdom is ultimate! There is both an individual and corporate focus in our responsibility to God.
  - F. We should encourage believers in a democratic system to actively participate in the process of government and to implement, when possible, the teachings of Scripture.
  - G. Social change must be preceded by individual conversion. There is no real lasting eschatological hope in government. All human governments, though willed and used by God, are sinful expressions of human organization apart from God.
- This concept is expressed in the Johannine usage of "the world."

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

There are four terms in the Bible which relate to the afterlife.

- 1. In the OT the dead are gathered to a conscious but silent and inactive holding place called *Sheol*. The Greek counter-point to this was *Hades*, the place of the unseen.  
In both the OT and NT all humans at death went to this holding place. The rabbis asserted that it was divided into a section for the wicked (Tartarus) and a section for the righteous (Paradise). There may be evidence for this in Luke 23:43 (but to be fair, Paul uses the same term for heaven in II Cor. 12:4).
- 2. In II Peter 2:4 (and possibly referred to in Jude 6) the term *Tartarus* is used for the holding place of rebellious angels. In Greek mythology it was a prison under Hades for the half-human, half-divine Titans. In Jewish inter-biblical apocalyptic literature it was a special holding place for the rebellious angels (possibly related to Gen. 6 according to I Enoch).
- 3. The third NT term is *Gehenna* translated into English by the KJV as Hell. The Hebrew term is a contraction of the Hebrew phrase "valley of the sons of Hinnom." This valley, south of Jerusalem, was where the Phoenician fore god, Molech, was worshiped by child sacrifice. Even King Manasseh participated in this idolatry.  
The Jews of the first century had turned this area into the garbage dump for Jerusalem. Jesus used the metaphors associated with a garbage dump (fire, smoke, smell, worms) to describe eternal punishment. The term *Gehenna* only occurs once outside of the words of Jesus (i.e. James 3:6).  
This place was prepared for the Devil and his angles but rebellious, unrepentant humans will share their isolation No one is in Hell today. It will only be occupied after Judgement Day.
- 4. The last term is heaven. It is described in beautiful and expensive metaphors from the earth. The only vocabulary that biblical authors had was earthly. The Bible does not discuss or describe the afterlife, either heaven or hell, in specific terms, probably because they are beyond our ability to comprehend. The best thing about heaven is not its splendor but the presence of the Triune God and the possibility of fellowship with Him.

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: IS HEALING GOD'S PLAN FOR EVERY AGE?

1. Healing was a significant aspect of the ministry of Jesus and the Apostles.
2. It was intended primarily to confirm the message.
3. It shows the heart of God.
4. God has not changed and He still acts in love in healing.
5. There are examples where healing did not take place
  - a. Paul, II Cor. 12:7-10
  - b. Trophimus, II Tim. 4:20
6. Sin and sickness were associated in James and the rabbis (cf. Jn. 9:2; James 5:13-18).
7. Healing is not a guarantee of the New Covenant. It is not part of the atonement described in Isa. 53 and Ps. 103.
8. There is true mystery about why some are healed and some are not.
9. It is possible that although healing is present in every age, there was a significant increase during Jesus' lifetime; this increase will occur again just before His return.

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: THE HEART

The Greek term *kardia* is used in the Septuagint and NT to reflect the Hebrew term *lēb*. It is used in several ways (cf. Bauer, Arndt, Gingrich and Danker, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, pp. 403-404).

1. the center of physical life, a metaphor for the person (cf. Acts 14:17; II Corinthians 3:2-3; James 5:5)
2. the center of spiritual (moral) life
  - a. God knows the heart (cf. Luke 16:15; Rom. 8:27; I Cor. 14:25; I Thess. 2:4; Rev. 2:23)
  - b. used of mankind's spiritual life (cf. Matt. 15:18-19; 18:35; Rom. 6:17; I Tim. 1:5; II Tim. 2:22; I Pet. 1:22)
3. the center of the thought life (i.e. intellect, cf. Matt. 13:15; 24:48; Acts 7:23; 16:14; 28:27; Rom. 1:21; 10:6; 16:18; II Cor. 4:6; Eph. 1:18; 4:18; James 1:26; II Pet. 1:19; Rev. 18:7; heart is synonymous with mind in II Cor. 3:14-15 and Phil. 4:7)
4. the center of the volition (i.e. will, cf. Acts 5:4; 11:23; I Cor. 4:5; 7:37; II Cor. 9:7)
5. the center of the emotions (cf. Matt. 5:28; Acts 2:26,37; 7:54; 21:13; Rom. 1:24; II Cor. 2:4; 7:3; Eph. 6:22; Phil. 1:7)
6. unique place of the Spirit's activity (cf. Rom. 5:5; II Cor. 1:22; Gal. 4:6 [i.e. Christ in our hearts, Eph. 3:17])
7. The heart is a metaphorical way of referring to the entire person (cf. Matt. 22:37, quoting Deut. 6:5). The thoughts, motives, and actions attributed to the heart fully reveal the type of individual. The OT has some striking usages of the terms
  - a. Gen. 6:6; 8:21, "God was grieved to His heart" (also notice Hosea 11:8-9)
  - b. Deut. 4:29; 6:5, "with all your heart and all your soul"
  - c. Deut. 10:16, "uncircumcised heart" and Rom. 2:29
  - d. Ezek. 18:31-32, "a new heart"
  - e. Ezek. 36:26, "a new heart" vs. "a heart of stone"

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: HEAVENS

In the OT the term "heaven" is usually PLURAL (i.e. *shamayim*). The Hebrew term means "height." God dwells on high. This concept reflects the holiness and transcendence of God.

In Gen. 1:1 the PLURAL "heavens and earth" has been viewed as God creating (1) the atmosphere above this planet or (2) a way of referring to all of reality (i.e. spiritual and physical). From this basic understanding other texts were cited as referring to levels of heaven: "heaven of heavens" (cf. Ps. 68:33) or "heaven and the heaven of heavens" (cf. Deut. 10:14; I Kgs. 8:27; Neh. 9:6; Ps. 148:4). The rabbis surmised that there might be (1) two heavens (i.e. R. Judah, Hagigah 12b); (2) three heavens (Test. Levi 2-3; Ascen. of Isa. 6-7; Midrash Tehillim on Ps. 114:1); (3) five heavens (III Baruch); (4) seven heavens (R. Simonb. Lakish; II Enoch 8; Ascen. of Isa. 9:7); even (5) ten heavens (II Enoch 20:3b; 22:1). All of these were meant to show God's separation from physical creation and/or His transcendence. The most common number of heavens in rabbinical Judaism was seven. A. Cohen, *Everyman's Talmud* (p. 30), says this was connected to the astronomical spheres, but I think it refers to seven being the perfect number (i.e. days of creation with seven representing God's rest in Gen. 1).

Paul, in II Cor. 12:2, mentions the "third" heaven (Greek *ouranos*) as a way of identifying God's personal, majestic presence. Paul had a personal encounter with God!

## **SPECIAL TOPIC: THE FAMILY OF HEROD THE GREAT**

### **I. Herod the Great**

- A. King of Judea (37-4 B.C.), an Idumean (from Edom), who, through political maneuvering, managed to be appointed ruler of a large part of Palestine (Canaan) by the Roman Senate in 40 B.C. by means of the support of Mark Antony.)
- B. He is mentioned in Matt. 2:1-19; Luke 1:5
- C. His sons
  - 1. Herod Philip (son of Mariamne of Simon)
    - a. husband of Herodias (4 B.C. - A.D. 34)
    - b. mentioned in Matt. 14:3; Mark 6:17
  - 2. Herod Philip (son of Cleopatra)
    - a. Tetrarch of area north and west of the Sea of Galilee (4 B.C. - A.D. 34)
    - b. mentioned in Luke 3:1
  - 3. Herod Antipas
    - a. Tetrarch of Galilee and Perea (4 B.C. - A.D. 39)
    - b. mentioned in Matt. 14:1-12; Mark 6:14,29; Luke 3:1,19; 9:7-9; 13:31; 23:6-12,15; Acts 4:27; 13:1
  - 4. Archelaus, Herod the Ethnarch
    - a. ruler of Judea, Samaria, and Idumea (4 B.C. - A.D. 6)
    - b. mentioned in Matt. 2:22
  - 5. Aristobulus (son of Mariamne)
    - a. mentioned as father of Herod Agrippa I who was
      - (1) King of Judea (A.D. 37-44)
      - (2) mentioned in Acts 12:1-24; 23:35
        - (a) his son was Herod Agrippa II
          - Tetrarch of northern territory (A.D. 50-70)
        - (b.) his daughter was Bernice
          - consort of her brother
          - mentioned in Acts 25:13-26:32
        - (c) his daughter was Drusilla
          - wife of Felix
          - mentioned Acts 24:24

### **II. Biblical References to the Herods**

- A. Herod the Tetrarch who was mentioned in Matthew 14:1ff.; Luke 3:1; 9:7; 13:31, and 23:7, was the son of Herod the Great. At the death of Herod the Great, his kingdom was divided among several of his sons. The term “Tetrarch” meant “leader of the fourth part.” This Herod was known as Herod Antipas, which is the shortened form of Antipater. He controlled Galilee and Perea. This meant that much of Jesus’ ministry was in the territory of this second generation Idumean ruler.
- B. Herodias was the daughter of Herod Antipas’ brother, Aristobulus. She had also been previously married to Philip, the half brother of Herod Antipas. This was not Philip the Tetrarch who controlled the area just north of Galilee, but the other brother Philip who lived in Rome. Herodias had one daughter by Philip. On Herod Antipas’ visit to Rome he met and was seduced by Herodias, who was looking for political advancement. Therefore, Herod Antipas divorced his wife, who was a Nabatean princess, and Herodias divorced Philip so that she and Herod Antipas could be married. She was also the sister of Herod Agrippa I (cf. Acts 12).
- C. We learn the name of Herodias’ daughter, Salome, from Flavius Josephus in his book *The Antiquities of the Jews* 8:5:4. She must have been between the ages of twelve and seventeen at this point. She was obviously controlled and manipulated by her mother. She later married Philip the Tetrarch, but was soon widowed.
- D. About ten years after the beheading of John the Baptist, Herod Antipas went to Rome at the instigation of his wife Herodias to seek the title of king because Agrippa I, her brother, had received that title. But Agrippa I wrote Rome and accused Antipas of corroboration with the Parthians, a hated enemy of Rome from the Fertile Crescent (Mesopotamia). The Emperor apparently believed Agrippa I and Herod Antipas, along with his wife Herodias, was exiled to Spain.
- E. It may make it easier to remember these different Herods as they are presented in the New Testament by remembering that Herod the Great killed the children in Bethlehem; Herod Antipas killed John the Baptist; Herod Agrippa I killed the Apostle James; and Herod Agrippa II heard Paul’s appeal recorded in the book of Acts.

### **III. Background Information on the Family of Herod the Great - for more information, consult the index of Flavius Josephus in *Antiquities of the Jews*.**

## SPECIAL TOPIC: HERODIANS

The term is derived from their association with the ruling family of Herod.

The Herods were an Idumaen (Edom) family of rulers starting with Herod the Great. At his death several of his sons divided his kingdom. All the Herods were supporters of the Roman government. Their followers wanted to keep the political status quo. They preferred the rule of the Herods to direct Roman rule. This group was strictly political. They did not officially identify with the theology of the Pharisees or Sadducees.

Herod the Great

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B. Recorded in Matt. 2:1-19; Luke 1:5

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- H. It may make it easier to remember these different Herods as they are presented in the New Testament by remembering that Herod the Great killed the children in Bethlehem; Herod Antipas killed John the Baptist; Herod Agrippa I killed the Apostle James; and Herod Agrippa II heard Paul's appeal recorded in the book of Acts.

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: HOLY

### I. Old Testament Usage

- A. The etymology of the term (*kadosh*) is uncertain, possibly Canaanite. It is possible that part of the root (i.e. *kd*) means “to divide.” This is the source of the popular definition “separated (from Canaanite culture, cf. Deut. 7:6; 14:2,21; 26:19) for God’s use.”
- B. It relates to cultic things, places, times, and persons. It is not used in Genesis, but becomes common in Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers.
- C. In the Prophetic literature (esp. Isaiah and Hosea) the personal element previously present, but not emphasized comes to the fore. It becomes a way of designating the essence of God (cf. Isa. 6:3). God is holy His name representing His character is Holy. His people who are to reveal His character to a needy world are holy (if they obey the covenant in faith).
- D. God’s mercy and love are inseparable from the theological concepts of covenants, justice, and essential character. Herein is the tension in God toward an unholy, fallen, rebellious humanity. There is a very interesting article on the relationship between God as “merciful” and God as “holy” in Robert B. Girdlestone, *Synonyms of the Old Testament*, pp. 112-113.

### II. The New Testament

- A. The writers of the NT are Hebrew thinkers (except Luke), but influenced by Koine Greek (i.e. the Septuagint). It is the Greek translation of the OT that controls their vocabulary, not Classical Greek literature, thought, or religion.
- B. Jesus is holy because He is of God and like God (cf. Luke 1:35; 4:34; Acts 3:14; 4:27,30). He is the Holy and Righteous One (cf. Acts 3:14; 22:14). Jesus is holy because He is sinless (cf. John 8:46; II Cor. 5:21; Heb. 4:15; 7:26; I Pet. 1:19; 2:22; I John 3:5).
- C. Because God is holy, His children are to be holy (cf. Lev. 11:44-45; 19:2; 20:7,26; Matt. 5:48; I Pet. 1:16). Because Jesus is holy His followers are to be holy (cf. Rom. 8:28-29; II Cor. 3:18; Gal. 4:19; Eph. 1:4; I Thess. 3:13; 4:3; I Pet. 1:15). Christians are saved to serve in Christlikeness.

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: HOMOSEXUALITY

There is much modern cultural pressure to accept homosexuality as an appropriate alternate lifestyle. The Bible condemns it as a destructive lifestyle, out of the will of God for His creation.

1. it violates the command of Gen. 1 to be fruitful and multiply
2. it characterizes pagan worship and culture (cf. Lev. 18:22; 20:13; Rom. 1:26-27; and Jude 7)
3. it reveals a self-centered independence from God (cf. I Cor. 6:9-10)

However, before I leave this topic let me assert God’s love and forgiveness to all rebellious human beings. Christians have no right to act hatefully and arrogantly towards this particular sin, especially when it is obvious that all of us sin. Prayer, concern, testimony, and compassion do far more in this area than vehement condemnation. God’s Word and His Spirit will do the condemning if we let them. All sexual sins, not just this one, are an abomination to God and lead to judgment. Sexuality is a gift from God for mankind’s well-being, joy, and a stable society. But this powerful, God-given urge is often turned into rebellious, self-centered, pleasure-seeking, “more-for-me-at-any-cost” living (cf. Rom. 8:1-8; Gal. 6:7-8).

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: HOPE

Paul often uses this term in several different but related senses. It is often associated with the consummation of the believer’s faith (cf. I Tim. 1:1). This can be expressed as glory, eternal life, ultimate salvation, Second Coming, etc. The consummation is certain, but the time element is future and unknown.

1. the Second Coming (cf. Gal. 5:5; Eph. 1:18; 4:4; Titus 2:13)
2. Jesus is our hope (cf. I Tim. 1:1)
3. the believer to be presented to God (cf. Col. 1:22-23; I Thess. 2:19)
4. hope laid up in heaven (cf. Col. 1:5)
5. ultimate salvation (cf. I Thess. 4:13)
6. the glory of God (cf. Rom. 5:2; II Cor. 3:7-12; Col. 1:27)
7. the salvation of Gentiles by Christ (cf. Col. 1:27)
8. assurance of salvation (cf. I Thess. 5:8-9)
9. eternal life (cf. Titus 1:2; 3:7)



10. redemption of all creation (cf. Rom. 8:20-22)
11. adoption's consummation (cf. Rom. 8:23-25)
12. a title for God (cf. Rom. 15:13)
13. OT guide for NT believers (cf. Rom. 15:4)

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## **SPECIAL TOPIC: HUMAN SPEECH**

### **I. OPENING THOUGHTS FROM PROVERBS**

- A. Language is part of the image of God in mankind (i.e. creation is spoken into existence and God talks to His human creation). It is a vital part of our personhood.
- B. Human speech enables us to communicate to others how we feel about life. Therefore, it reveals who we really are (Prov. 18:2; 4:23 [20-27]). Speech is the acid test of the person (Prov. 23:7).
- C. We are social creatures. We are concerned with acceptance and affirmation. We need it from God and from our fellow humans. Words have the power to meet these needs in both positive (Prov. 17:10) and negative (Prov. 12:18) ways.
- D. There is tremendous power in human speech (Prov. 18:20-21)—power to bless and heal (Prov. 10:11,21) and power to curse and destroy (Prov. 11:9).
- E. We reap what we sow (Prov. 12:14).

### **II. PRINCIPLES FROM PROVERBS**

- A. The negative and destructive potential of human speech
  1. the words of evil men (1:11-19; 10:6; 11:9,11; 12:2-6)
  2. the words of the adulteress (5:2-5; 6:24-35; 7:5ff; 9:13-18; 22:14)
  3. the words of the liar (6:12-15,19; 10:18; 12:17-19,22; 14:5,25; 17:4; 19:5,9,28; 21:28; 24:28; 25:18; 26:23-28)
  4. the words of the fool (10:10,14; 14:3; 15:14; 18:6-8)
  5. the words of false witnesses (6:19; 12:17; 19:5,9,28; 21:28; 24:28; 25:18)
  6. the words of a gossip (6:14,19; 11:13; 16:27-28; 20:19; 25:23; 26:20)
  7. the words too quickly spoken (6:1-5; 12:18; 20:25; 29:20)
  8. the words of flattery (29:5)
  9. too many words (10:14,19,23; 11:13; 13:3,16; 14:23; 15:2; 17:27-28; 18:2; 21:23; 29:20)
  10. perverted words (17:20; 19:1)
- B. the positive, healing and edifying potential of human speech
  1. the words of the righteous (10:11,20-21,31-32; 12:14; 13:2; 15:23; 16:13; 18:20)
  2. the words of the discerning (10:13; 11:12)
  3. the words of knowledge (15:1,4,7,8; 20:15)
  4. the words of healing (15:4)
  5. the words of a gentle answer (15:1,4,18,23; 16:1; 25:15)
  6. the words of a pleasant answer (12:25; 15:26,30; 16:24)
  7. the words of the law (22:17-21)

### **III. THE OT PATTERN CONTINUES IN THE NT**

- A. Human speech enables us to communicate to others how we feel about life; therefore, it reveals who we really are (Matt. 15:1-20; Mark 7:2-23).
- B. We are social creatures. We are concerned with acceptance and affirmation. We need it from God and from our fellow man. Words have the power to meet these needs in both positive (II Tim. 3:15-17) and negative (James 3:2-12) ways.
- C. There is tremendous power in human speech; power to bless (Eph. 4:29) and power to curse (James 3:9). We are responsible for what we say (James 3:2-12).
- D. We will be judged by our words (Matt. 12:33-37; Luke 6:39-45) as well as our deeds (Matt. 25:31-46). We reap what we sow (Gal. 6:7).

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## **SPECIAL TOPIC: HUNGER**

### **I. Introduction**

- A. Hunger is one ever-present reminder of the fallen condition of humanity and creation.



- B. hunger is one aspect of the problem of evil and suffering. It is directly attributed to mankind, not God. Although God used agricultural blessings or cursings as a way to reward and punish His Covenant People (Deut. 27-28), this has not been true for unbelievers in general (Matt. 5:45). Hunger is one more example of greedy, selfish, materialistic humanity. The problem of hunger is not really one of food, but of human motivation and priorities.
  - C. Hunger is an opportunity for redeemed humanity to reflect God's love. Believers' reactions to physical need in the Church and in the world shows who we really are.
- II. Biblical Material
- A. Old Testament
    - 1. Moses
      - a. one of the three possible tithes in ancient Israel was for the poor (Deut. 14:28-29)
      - b. the Law provided special provisions for the poor to eat (Exod. 23:11; Lev. 19:10; 23:22; Deut. 24:19-22)
      - c. the Law provided for special, inexpensive sacrifices for the poor (Lev. 14:21)
      - d. Israel was to have a compassionate and open-handed attitude toward the poor and needy (Deut. 15:7-11, cf. Job 29:16; 30:25; 31:16-23)
    - 2. Wisdom Literature
      - a. There were special blessings reserved for those who helped the poor (Ps. 41:4)
      - b. To help the poor was to help God (Prov. 14:31; 17:5; 19:17)
    - 3. The Prophets
      - a. God demanded worship to Him in the form of social justice and compassion to the needy (Isa. 58:6-7; Mic. 6:8)
      - b. One sign of God's message was that it was proclaimed to the poor and needy (Isa. 61:1-2)
      - c. God's prophets railed against social exploitation (Amos 2:6-8; 5:10-13; Micah)
  - B. New Testament
    - 1. The Gospels
      - a. Help for the poor is admonished (Mark 10:21; Luke 3:11)
      - b. Judgment is based on our social love towards others in Jesus name. In fact, to help others is to help Jesus (Matt. 25:31-46)
      - c. Mark 14:7 has been badly misunderstood when it is asserted that this reflects Jesus' lack of concern for the poor. This verse is meant to emphasize His uniqueness, not a put-down to the poor.
      - d. Isaiah 61:1-2 reflects that the recipients of God's message will be the socially ostracized (Luke 4:18; 7:22; 14:21).
    - 2. Paul
      - a. Paul learned from Antioch of Syria the concept of a special love offering for the poor of the Jerusalem church (Rom. 15:26; I Cor. 16:1; II Cor. 8:4,6,19; Gal. 2).
      - b. Paul emphasizes grace, faith, and works (Eph. 2:8-10).
    - 3. James (NT Wisdom Literature)
      - a. Faith in God through Christ without social concern is sick (James 2:14-17).
      - b. He even says that faith without works is dead!
    - 4. John
      - a. The book of I John asserts that Christian assurance is based on a changed life of faith and service (I John 3:17-18).
- III. Conclusion
- A. Human misery and need are related to humanity's sin. There are several aspects to hunger:
    - 1. foolish behavior (Prov. 19:15)
    - 2. punishment of God (Deut. 27-28)
    - 3. related to spiritual service (II Cor. 11:27)
    - 4. cultural circumstances (greed, conception, etc).
    - 5. material circumstances (famine, floods, hail, etc).
  - B. God really cares for people. He loves those in need in a unique way!
  - C. The Church in action is God's answer to human need (physical and spiritual)
    - 1. direct, personal action
    - 2. corporate parish/church action
    - 3. political organization for change
  - D. We must critically evaluate our culture and personal priorities in light of the Scriptures (II Cor. 8-9).
  - E. We need our eyes, hearts, and hands opened to human need at home and abroad; in the church and in the world.
  - F. Help must be related to who we are in Christ in light of the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20). Help must be physical and spiritual.

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: ILLUMINATION

“God has acted in the past to clearly reveal Himself to mankind. In theology this is called revelation. He selected certain men to record and explain this self-revelation. In theology this is called inspiration. He has sent His Spirit to help readers understand His word. In theology this is called illumination. The problem arises when we assert that the Spirit is involved in understanding God’s word—so why are there so many interpretations of it?

Part of the problem lies in the reader’s pre-understanding or personal experiences. Often a personal agenda is addressed by using the Bible in a proof-text or atomistic fashion. Often a theological grid is imposed over the Bible allowing it to speak only in certain areas and in selected ways. Illumination simply cannot be equated with inspiration although the Holy Spirit is involved in each.

The best approach may be to attempt to assert the central idea of a paragraph, not interpret every detail of the text. It is the topical thought which conveys the original author’s central truth. Outlining the book or literary unit helps one follow the intent of the original inspired author. No interpreter is inspired. We cannot reproduce the biblical writer’s method of interpretation. We can and must attempt to understand what they were saying to their day and then communicate that truth to our own day. There are parts of the Bible that are ambiguous or hidden (until a certain time or period). There will always be disagreements on some texts and subjects but we must state clearly the central truths and allow freedom for individual interpretations within the boundary of the original author’s intent. Interpreters must walk in the light they have, always being open to more light from the Bible and the Spirit. God will judge us based on the level of our understanding and how we live out that understanding.

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: INTERCESSORY PRAYER

### I. Introduction

- A. Prayer is significant because of Jesus’ example
  - 1. personal prayer, Mark 1:35; Luke 3:21; 6:12; 9:29; 22:29-46
  - 2. cleansing of the Temple, Matt. 21:13; Mark 11:17; Luke 19:46
  - 3. Model Prayer, Matt. 6:5-13; Luke 11:2-4
- B. Prayer is our putting into tangible action our belief in a personal, caring God who is present, willing, and able to act on our behalf and others’
- C. God has personally limited Himself to act on the prayers of His children in many areas (cf. James 4:2)
- D. The major purpose of prayer is fellowship and time with the Triune God.
- E. The scope of prayer is anything or anyone that concerns believers. We may pray once, believing, or over and over again as the thought or concern returns.
- F. Prayer can involve several elements
  - 1. praise and adoration of the Triune God
  - 2. thanksgiving to God for His presence, fellowship, and provisions
  - 3. confession of our sinfulness, both past and present
  - 4. petition of our sensed needs or desires
  - 5. intercession where we hold the needs of others before the Father
- G. Intercessory prayer is a mystery. God loves those for whom we pray much more than we do, yet our prayers often effect a change, response, or need, not only in ourselves, but in them.

### II. Biblical Material

- A. Old Testament
  - 1. Some examples of intercessory prayer
    - a. Abraham pleading for Sodom, Gen. 18:22ff
    - b. Moses’ prayers for Israel
      - (1) Exodus 5:22-23
      - (2) Exodus 32:31ff
      - (3) Deuteronomy 5:5
      - (4) Deuteronomy 9:18,25ff
    - c. Samuel prays for Israel
      - (1) I Samuel 7:5-6,8-9
      - (2) I Samuel 12:16-23
      - (3) I Samuel 15:11
    - d. David prayed for his child, II Samuel 12:16-18
  - 2. God is looking for intercessors, Isaiah 59:16
  - 3. Known, unconfessed sin or an unrepentant attitude affects our prayers
    - a. Psalm 66:1

- b. Proverbs 28:9
- c. Isaiah 59:1-2; 64:7

## B. New Testament

1. The Son and Spirit's intercessory ministry
  - a. Jesus
    - (1) Romans 8:34
    - (2) Hebrews 7:25
    - (3) I John 2:1
  - b. Holy Spirit, Romans 8:26-27
2. Paul's intercessory ministry
  - a. Prays for the Jews
    - (1) Romans 9:1ff
    - (2) Romans 10:1
  - b. Prays for the churches
    - (1) Romans 1:9
    - (2) Ephesians 1:16
    - (3) Philippians 1:3-4,9
    - (4) Colossians 1:3,9
    - (5) I Thessalonians 1:2-3
    - (6) II Thessalonians 1:11
    - (7) II Timothy 1:3
    - (8) Philemon, v. 4
  - c. Paul asked the churches to pray for him
    - (1) Romans 15:30
    - (2) II Corinthians 1:11
    - (3) Ephesians 6:19
    - (4) Colossians 4:3
    - (5) I Thessalonians 5:25
    - (6) II Thessalonians 3:1
3. The church's intercessory ministry
  - a. Prayer for one another
    - (1) Ephesians 6:18
    - (2) I Timothy 2:1
    - (3) James 5:16
  - b. Prayer requested for special groups
    - (1) our enemies, Matt. 5:44
    - (2) Christian workers, Hebrews 13:18
    - (3) rulers, I Timothy 2:2
    - (4) the sick, James 5:13-16
    - (5) backsliders, I John 5:16
  - c. Prayer for all men, I Timothy 2:1

## III. Hindrances to an answered prayer

### A. Our relationship to Christ and the Spirit

1. Abide in Him, John 15:7
2. In His name, John 14:13,14; 15:16; 16:23-24
3. In the Spirit, Ephesians 6:18; Jude 20
4. According to God's will, Matthew 6:10; I John 3:22; 5:14-15

### B. Motives

1. Not wavering, Matthew 21:22; James 1:6-7
2. Humility and repentance, Luke 18:9-14
3. Asking amiss, James 4:3
4. Selfishness, James 4:2-3

### C. Other aspects

1. Perseverance
  - a. Luke 18:1-8
  - b. Colossians 4:2
  - c. James 5:16

2. Kept on asking
  - a. Matthew 7:7-8
  - b. Luke 11:5-13
  - c. James 1:5
3. Discord at home, I Peter 3:7
4. Free from known sin
  - a. Psalm 66:18
  - b. Proverbs 28:9
  - c. Isaiah 59:1-2
  - d. Isaiah 64:7

#### IV. Theological Conclusion

- A. What a privilege! What an opportunity! What a duty and responsibility!
- B. Jesus is our example. The Spirit is our guide. The Father is eagerly waiting.
- C. It could change you, your family, your friends, and the world.

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### SPECIAL TOPIC: JAMES, THE HALF BROTHER OF JESUS

- A. He was called “James the Just” and later nicknamed “camel knees” because he constantly prayed on his knees (from Hegesippus, quoted by Eusebius).
- B. James did not become a believer until after the resurrection (cf. Mark 3:21; John 7:5). Jesus appeared to him personally after the resurrection (cf. I Cor. 15:7).
- C. He was present in the upper room with the disciples (cf. Acts 1:14) and was possibly also there when the Spirit came on Pentecost.
- D. He was married (cf. I Cor. 9:5).
- E. Paul refers to him as a pillar (possibly an apostle, cf. Gal. 1:19) but was not one of the Twelve (cf. Gal. 2:9; Acts 12:17; 15:13ff).
- F. In *Antiquities of the Jews*, 20:9:1, Josephus says that he was stoned in A.D. 62 by orders from the Sadducees of the Sanhedrin, while another tradition (the second century writers, Clement of Alexandria or Hegesippus) says he was pushed off the wall of the Temple.
- G. For many generations after Jesus’ death a relative of Jesus was appointed leader of the church in Jerusalem.
- H. He wrote the NT book of James.

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### SPECIAL TOPIC: JESUS THE NAZARENE

There are several different Greek terms that the NT uses to precisely designate which Jesus.

- I. NT Terms
  - A. Nazareth - the city in Galilee (cf. Luke 1:26; 2:4,39,51; 4:16; Acts 10:38). This city is not mentioned in contemporary sources, but has been found in later inscriptions.  
For Jesus to be from Nazareth was not a compliment (cf. John 1:46). The sign over Jesus’ cross which included this place name was a sign of Jewish contempt.
  - B. *Nazarēnos* - seems to also refer to a geographical location (cf. Luke 4:34; 24:19).
  - C. *Nazōraios* - may refer to a city, but could also be a play on the Hebrew Messianic term “Branch” (*netzer*, cf. Isa. 4:2; 11:1; 53:2; Jer. 23:5; 33:15; Zech. 3:8; 6:12; in the NT Rev. 22:16). Luke uses this of Jesus in 18:37 and Acts 2:22; 3:6; 4:10; 6:14; 22:8; 24:5; 26:9.
  - D. Related to #3 *nāzīr* means consecrated one by means of a vow.
- II. Historical usages outside the NT. This designation has other historical usages.
  - A. It denoted a Jewish (pre-Christian) heretical group (Aramaic *nāsōrayyā*).
  - B. It was used in Jewish circles to describe believers in Christ (cf. Acts 24:5,14; 28:22, *nosri*).
  - C. It became the regular term to denote believers in the Syrian (Aramaic) churches. “Christian” was used in the Greek churches to denote believers.
  - D. Sometime after the fall of Jerusalem, the Pharisees reorganized at Jamnia and instigated a formal separation between the synagogue and the church. An example of the type of curse formulas against Christians is found in “the Eighteen Benedictions” from *Berakoth* 28b-29a, which calls the believers “Nazarenes.”  
“May the Nazarenes and heretics disappear in a moment; they shall be erased from the book of life and not be written with

the faithful.”

E. It was used by Justin Martyr, *Dial.* 126:1 who used Isaiah’s *netzer* of Jesus.

### III. Author’s opinion

I am surprised by so many spellings of the term, although I know this is not unheard of in the OT as “Joshua” has several different spellings in Hebrew. Yet, because of

- A. the close association with the Messianic term “Branch”
- B. the combined with the negative context
- C. little or no contemporary attestation to the city of Nazareth in Galilee causes me to remain uncertain as to its precise meaning
- D. it coming from the mouth of a demon in an eschatological sense (i.e. “Have you come to destroy us?”).

For a full bibliography of studies of this word group by scholarship see Colin Brown (ed.), *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, vol. 2, p. 346 or Raymond E. Brown, *Birth*, pp. 209-213, 223-225.

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: THE ANY-MOMENT RETURN OF JESUS vs. THE NOT YET (NT PARADOX)

- A. New Testament eschatological passages reflect Old Testament prophetic insight that viewed the end-time through contemporary occurrences.
- B. Matt. 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21 are so difficult to interpret because they deal with several questions simultaneously.
  - 1. when will the Temple be destroyed
  - 2. what will be the sign of the Messiah’s return
  - 3. when will this age end (cf. Matt. 24:3)?
- C. The genre of New Testament eschatological passages is usually a combination of apocalyptic and prophetic language which is purposely ambiguous and highly symbolic.
- D. Several passages in the NT (cf. Matt. 24, Mark 13, Luke 17 and 21, I and II Thessalonians and Revelation) deal with the Second Coming. These passages emphasize:
  - 1. the exact time of the event is unknown, but the event is certain
  - 2. we can know the general time, but not specific time of the events
  - 3. it will occur suddenly and unexpectedly
  - 4. we must be prayerful, ready, and faithful to assigned tasks.
- E. There is a theological paradoxical tension between (1) the any-moment return (cf. Luke 12:40,46; 21:36; Matt.24:27,44) versus (2) the fact that some events in history must occur.
- F. The NT states that some events will occur before the Second Coming.
  - 1. The Gospel preached to the whole world (cf. Matt. 24:14; Mark 13:10)
  - 2. The great apostasy (cf. Matt. 24:10-13, 21; I Tim. 4:1; II Tim. 3:1ff.; II Thess. 2:3)
  - 3. The revelation of the “man of sin” (cf. Dan. 7:23-26; 9:24-27; II Thess. 2:3)
  - 4. Removal of that/who restrains (cf. II Thess. 2:6-7)
  - 5. Jewish revival (cf. Zech. 12:10; Rom. 11)
- G. Luke 17:26-37 is not paralleled in Mark. It does have a partial Synoptic parallel in Matt. 24:37-44.

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: JESUS AND THE SPIRIT

There is a fluidity between the work of the Spirit and the Son. G. Campbell Morgan said the best name for the Spirit is “the other Jesus.” The following is an outline comparison of the work and titles of the Son and Spirit.

- 1. Spirit called “Spirit of Jesus” or similar expressions (cf. Rom. 8:9; II Cor. 3:17; Gal. 4:6; I Pet. 1:11).
- 2. Both called by the same terms
  - a. “truth”
    - 1) Jesus (John 14:6)
    - 2) Spirit (John 14:17; 16:13)
  - b. “advocate”
    - 1) Jesus (I John 2:1)
    - 2) Spirit (John 14:16,26; 15:26; 16:7)
  - c. “Holy”

- 1) Jesus (Luke 1:35; 14:26)
- 2) Spirit (Luke 1:35)
3. Both indwell believers
  - a. Jesus (Matt. 28:20; John 14:20,23; 15:4-5; Rom. 8:10; II Cor. 13:5; Gal. 2:20; Eph. 3:17; Col. 1:27)
  - b. Spirit (John 14:16-17; Rom. 8:9,11; I Cor. 3:16; 6:19; II Tim. 1:14)
  - c. and even the Father (John 14:23; II Cor. 6:16)

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: JOHN 1 COMPARED TO I JOHN 1

<u>Gospel</u>	<u>Letter</u>
1. In the beginning (1:1,2)	From the beginning (1:1)
2. Word ( <i>logos</i> ) (1:1)	Word ( <i>logos</i> ) (1:1)
3. Life ( <i>zōē</i> ) (1:4)	Life ( <i>zōē</i> ) (1:1,2)
4. Light in Jesus (1:4)	Light in God (1:5)
5. Light revealed (1:4)	Light revealed (1:4)
6. Darkness (1:5)	Darkness (1:5)
7. Witness to light (1:6-8)	Witness to light (1:3,5)
8. Humans brought to God	Humans brought to God (1:3)
9. Beheld His glory (1:14)	Beheld His glory (1:1-3)

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: FROM MY COMMENTARY, VOL. 4, INTRODUCTION TO JOHN 6 (The Lord's Supper in John)

- A. The Gospel of John does not record the Lord's Supper itself, although chapters 13-17 record the dialogue and prayer in the Upper Room. This omission may be intentional. The church of the late first century began to view the ordinances in a sacramental sense. They saw them as channels of grace. John may have been reacting to this developing sacramental view by not recording Jesus' baptism or the Lord's Supper.
- B. John 6 is in the context of the feeding of the five thousand. However, many use it to teach a sacramental view of the Eucharist. This is the source of the Roman Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation (vv. 53-56).  
The question over how chapter 6 relates to the Eucharist shows the dual nature of the Gospels. Obviously, the Gospels relate to Jesus' words and life, yet they were written decades later and expressed the individual authors' community of faith. So there are three levels of authorial intent: 1.the Spirit
  2. Jesus and the original hearers
  3. the Gospel writers and their readers.
 How is one to interpret? The only verifiable method must be a contextual, grammatical, lexical approach, informed by a historical setting.
- C. We must remember that the audience was Jewish and the cultural background was the rabbinical expectation of the Messiah being a super-Moses (cf. vv. 30-31), especially in regard to the Exodus experiences like "manna." The rabbis would use Ps. 72:16 as a proof text. Jesus' unusual statements (cf. vv. 60-62, 66), were meant to counteract the crowd's false Messianic expectations (cf. vv. 14-15).
- D. The early church fathers did not all agree that this passage refers to the Lord's Supper. Clement of Alexandria, Origen and Eusebius never mention the Lord's Supper in their discussions on this passage.
- E. The metaphors of this passage are very similar to Jesus' words used with the "woman at the well" in John 4. Earthly water and bread are used as metaphors of eternal life and spiritual realities.
- F. This multiplying of bread is the only miracle recorded in all four Gospels!

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: JOHN'S USE OF THE VERB "BELIEVE" (the noun is rare)

John primarily combines “believe” with a PREPOSITION

1. *eis* means “into.” This unique construction emphasizes believers putting their trust/faith in Jesus
  - a. into His name (John 1:12; 2:23; 3:18; I John 5:13)
  - b. into Him (John 2:11; 3:15,18; 4:39; 6:40; 7:5,31,39,48; 8:30; 9:36; 10:42; 11:45,48; 12:37,42)
  - c. into Me (John 6:35; 7:38; 11:25,26; 12:44,46; 14:1,12; 16:9; 17:20)
  - d. into the One He has sent (John 6:28-29)
  - e. into the Son (John 3:36; 9:35; I John 5:10)
  - f. into Jesus (John 12:11)
  - g. into Light (John 12:36)
  - h. into God (John 12:44; 14:1)
2. *ev* means “in” as in John 3:15 (Mark 1:15)
3. the DATIVE CASE with no PREPOSITION (I John 3:23; 4:50; 5:10)
4. *hoti*, which means “believe that,” gives content as to what to believe. Some examples are
  - a. Jesus is the Holy One of God (6:69)
  - b. Jesus is the I Am (8:24)
  - c. Jesus in the Father and the Father in Him (10:38)
  - d. Jesus is the Christ (11:27; 20:31)
  - e. Jesus is the Son of God (11:27; 20:31)
  - f. Jesus was sent by the Father (11:42; 17:8,21)
  - g. Jesus is one with the Father (14:10-11)
  - h. Jesus came from the Father (16:27,30)
  - i. Jesus identified Himself in the covenant name of the Father, “I am” (8:24; 13:19)

Biblical faith is in both a person and a message! It is evidenced by obedience, love, and perseverance.

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: SHOULD CHRISTIANS JUDGE ONE ANOTHER?

This issue must be dealt with in two ways. First believers are admonished not to judge one another (cf. Matt. 7:1-5; Luke 6:37,42; Rom. 2:1-11; James 4:11-12). However, believers are admonished to evaluate leaders (cf. Matt. 7:6,15-16; I Cor. 14:29; I Thess. 5:21; I Tim. 3:1-13; and I John 4:1-6).

### Some criteria for proper evaluation may be helpful

1. evaluation should be for the purpose of affirmation (cf. I John 4:1 - “test” with a view toward approval)
2. evaluation should be done in humility and gentleness (cf. Gal. 6:1)
3. evaluation must not focus on personal preference issues (cf. Rom. 14:1-23; I Cor. 8:1-13; 10:23-33)
4. evaluation should identify those leaders who have “no handle for criticism” from within the church or the community (cf. I Tim. 3).

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: THE KINGDOM OF GOD

In the OT YHWH was thought of as the King of Israel (cf. I Sam. 8:7; Ps. 10:16; 24:7-9; 29:10; 44:4; 89:18; 95:3; Isa. 43:15; 44:6) and the Messiah as the ideal king (cf. Ps. 2:6). With the birth of Jesus at Bethlehem (6-4 B.C.) The kingdom of God broke into human history with new power and redemption (new covenant, cf. Jer. 31:31-34; Ezek. 36:27-36). John the Baptist proclaimed the nearness of the kingdom (cf. Matt. 3:2; Mark 1:15). Jesus clearly taught that the kingdom was present in Himself and His teachings (cf. Matt. 4:17,23; 9:35; 10:7; 11:11-12; 12:28; 16:19; Mark 12:34; Luke 10:9,11; 11:20; 12:31-32; 16:16; 17:21). Yet the kingdom is also future (cf. Matt. 16:28; 24:14; 26:29; Mark 9:1; Luke 21:31; 22:16,18).

In the Synoptic parallels in Mark and Luke we find the phrase, “the kingdom of God.” This common topic of Jesus’ teachings involved the present reign of God in men’s hearts which one day will be consummated over all the earth. This is reflected in Jesus’ prayer in Matt. 6:10. Matthew, written to Jews, preferred the phrase that did not use the name of God (Kingdom of Heaven), while Mark and Luke, writing to Gentiles, used the common designation, employing the name of deity.

This is such a key phrase in the Synoptic gospels. Jesus’ first and last sermons, and most of His parables, dealt with this topic. It refers to the reign of God in human hearts now! It is surprising that John uses this phrase only twice (and never in Jesus’ parables). In John’s gospel “eternal life” is a key term and metaphor.



This tension is caused by the two comings of Christ. The OT focused only on one coming of God's Messiah—a military, judgmental, glorious coming—but the NT shows that He came the first time as the Suffering Servant of Isa. 53 and the humble king of Zech. 9:9. The two Jewish ages, the age of wickedness and the new age of righteousness, overlap. Jesus currently reigns in the hearts of believers, but will one day reign over all creation. He will come like the OT predicted! Believers live in “the already” versus “the not yet” of the kingdom of God (cf. Gordon D. Fee and Douglas Stuart's *How to Read The Bible For All Its Worth*, pp. 131-134).

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## **SPECIAL TOPIC: THE *KERYGMA* OF THE EARLY CHURCH**

- A. The promises by God made in the Old Testament have now been fulfilled with the coming of Jesus the Messiah (Acts 2:30; 3:19,24; 10:43; 26:6-7,22; Rom. 1:2-4; I Tim. 3:16; Heb. 1:1-2; I Peter 1:10-12; 2 Peter 1:18-19).
- B. Jesus was anointed as Messiah by God at His baptism (Acts 10:38).
- C. Jesus began His ministry in Galilee after His baptism (Acts 10:37).
- D. His ministry was characterized by doing good and performing mighty works (miracles) by means of the power of God (Mark 10:45; Acts 2:22; 10:38).
- E. The Messiah was crucified according to the eternal purpose of God (Mark 10:45; John 3:16; Acts 2:23; 3:13-15,18; 4:11; 10:39; 26:23; Rom. 8:34; I Cor. 1:17-18; 15:3; Gal. 1:4; Heb. 1:3; I Peter 1:2,19; 3:18; I John 4:10).
- F. He was raised from the dead and appeared to His disciples (Acts 2:24,31-32; 3:15,26; 10:40-41; 17:31; 26:23; Rom. 8:34; 10:9; I Cor. 15:4-7,12ff; I Thess. 1:10; I Tim. 3:16; I Peter 1:2; 3:18,21).
- G. Jesus was exalted by God and given the name “Lord” (Acts 2:25-29,33-36; 3:13; 10:36; Rom. 8:34; 10:9; I Tim. 3:16; Heb. 1:3; I Peter 3:22).
- H. He gave the Holy Spirit to form the new community of God (Acts 1:8; 2:14-18,38-39; 10:44-47; I Peter 1:12).
- I. He will come again for judgment and the restoration of all things (Acts 3:20-21; 10:42; 17:31; I Cor. 15:20-28; I Thess. 1:10).
- J. All who hear the message should repent and be baptized (Acts 2:21,38; 3:19; 10:43,47-48; 17:30; 26:20; Rom. 1:17; 10:9; I Peter 3:21).

This schema served as the essential proclamation of the early church, though different authors of the New Testament may leave out a portion or emphasize other particulars in their preaching. The entire Gospel of Mark closely follows the Petrine aspect of the *kerygma*. Mark is traditionally seen as structuring Peter's sermons, preached in Rome, into a written Gospel. Both Matthew and Luke follow Mark's basic structure.

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## **SPECIAL TOPIC: PAUL'S USE OF *KOSMOS***

Paul uses the term *kosmos* in several ways.

1. all the created order (cf. Rom. 1:20; Eph. 1:4; I Cor. 3:22; 8:4,5)
2. this planet (cf. II Cor. 1:17; Eph. 1:10; Col. 1:20; I Tim. 1:15; 3:16; 6:7)
3. humans (cf. 1:27-28; 4:9,13; Rom. 3:6,19; 11:15; II Cor. 5:19; Col. 1:6)
4. humans organized and functioning apart from God (cf. 1:20-21; 2:12; 3:19; 11:32; Gal. 4:3; Eph. 2:2,12; Phil. 2:15; Col. 2:8,20-24). It is very similar to John's usage (i.e. I John 2:15-17)
5. the current world structures (cf. 7:29-31; Gal. 6:14, similar to Phil. 3:4-9, where Paul describes Jewish structures)

In some ways these overlap and it is hard to categorize every usage. This term, like so many in Paul's thought, must be defined by the immediate context and not a pre-set definition. Paul's terminology was fluid (cf. James Stewart's *A Man in Christ*). He was not attempting to set up a systematic theology, but to proclaim Christ.

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## **SPECIAL TOPIC: LAYING ON OF HANDS IN THE BIBLE**

This gesture of personal involvement is used in several different ways in the Bible.

1. passing on the family leadership (cf. Gen. 48:18)
2. identifying with the death of a sacrificial animal as a substitute
  - a. priests (cf. Exod. 29:10,15,19; Lev. 16:21; Num. 8:12)

- b. laypersons (cf. Lev. 1:4; 3:2,8; 4:4,15,24; II Chr. 29:23)
- 3. setting persons aside to serve God in a special task or ministry (cf. Num. 8:10; 27:18,23; Deut. 34:9; Acts 6:6; 13:3; I Tim. 4:14; 5:22; II Tim. 1:6)
- 4. participating in the judicial stoning of a sinner (cf. Lev. 24:14)
- 5. receiving a blessing for health, happiness, and godliness (cf. Matt. 19:13,15; Mark 10:16)
- 6. relating to physical healing (cf. Matt. 9:18; Mark 5:23; 6:5; 7:32; 8:23; 16:18; Luke 4:40; 13:13; Acts 9:17; 28:8)
- 7. receiving the Holy Spirit (cf. Acts 8:17-19; 9:17; 19:6)

There is a surprising lack of uniformity in the passages that have been historically used to support the ecclesiastical installation of leaders (i.e. ordination).

- 1. In Acts 6:6 it is the Apostles who lay hands on the seven for local ministry.
- 2. In Acts 13:3 it is the prophets and teachers who lay hands on Barnabas and Paul for missionary service.
- 3. In I Timothy 4:14 it is the local elders who were involved in Timothy's initial call and installation
- 4. In II Timothy 1:6 it is Paul who lays hands on Timothy.

This diversity and ambiguity illustrate the lack of organization in the first century church. The early church was much more dynamic and regularly used the spiritual gifts of believers (cf. I Cor. 14). The NT is simply not written to advocate or delineate a governmental model or ordination procedure.

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## **SPECIAL TOPIC: HEBREW AND GREEK BACKGROUND OF *LOGOS***

Background of the term *Logos*

- 1. Hebrew background
  - a. the power of the spoken word (Isa. 55:11; Ps. 33:6; 107:20; 145:15), as in Creation (Gen. 1:3,6,9,11,14,20,24, 26,29) and the Patriarchal blessing (Gen. 27:1ff; 49:1)
  - b. Proverbs 8:12-23 personifies "Wisdom" as God's first creation and agent of all creation (cf. Ps. 33:6 and the non-canonical *Wisdom of Solomon*, 9:9)
  - c. the Targums (Aramaic translations and commentaries) substitute the phrase "Word of God" for *logos* because of their discomfort with anthropomorphic terms
- 2. Greek background
  - a. Heraclitus - the world was in flux; the impersonal divine and unchanging *logos* held it together and guided the changing process
  - b. Plato - the impersonal and unchanging *logos* kept the planets on course and determined the seasons
  - c. Stoics - the *logos* was the "world reason" or manager, but was semi-personal
  - d. Philo - he personified the concept of *logos* as "High Priest that set the soul of man before God," or "the bridge between man and God," or "the tiller by which the Pilot of the universe steers all things" (*kosmocrater*)

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## **SPECIAL TOPIC: ORDER OF PASSOVER SERVICE IN FIRST CENTURY JUDAISM**

- A. Prayer
- B. Cup of wine
- C. Hand washing by host and passing of basin to all
- D. Dip of bitter herbs and sauce
- E. Lamb and main meal
- F. Prayer and second dip of bitter herbs and sauce
- G. Second cup of wine with question-and-answer time for children (cf. Exod. 12:26-27)
- H. Singing of the first part of Hallel Psalm 113-114 and prayer
- I. Master of ceremony makes sop for each one after washing his hands
- J. All eat until filled; finish with a piece of lamb
- K. Third cup of wine after washing hands
- L. Singing second part of Hallel Psalm 115-118
- M. Fourth cup of wine

Many believe that the institution of the Lord's Supper occurred at "K."

## SPECIAL TOPIC: MAGIC

In ancient times there appear to be several types of individuals and groups involved in different kinds of magic.

1. There is a priestly caste from Medea called Chaldeans involved in astrology (cf. Dan. 1:20; 2:2,10,27; 4:7,9; 5:11; Matt. 2:1,7,16). Herodotus calls them “Median priests.” They were involved in foretelling and controlling future events based on the movement and configuration of astral gods (i.e. planets, stars, constellations, comets).
2. There is a philosophical, mathematical counterpoint group in Greek life known as the Pythagorians.
3. Most magical groups were made up of persons who claimed to be able to manipulate the supernatural or forces of nature (cf. Gen. 41:8,24; Exod. 7:11,22; 8:7,19; 9:11). Often these forces (or gods) were seen to be in conflict with humanity and by taking the side of this force or that force the possessor of the knowledge could control the forces for personal gain (cf. the magical papyri of the third and fourth centuries A.D.). These individuals would
  - a. foretell future events
  - b. control future events
  - c. interpret future events and dreams
  - d. curse or protect other individuals, cities, nations, armies, etc.
4. Magicians as in Acts 8:9,11 claimed to be able to manipulate the impersonal forces of nature or the personal (demonic) forces to perform their will. This often involved magical rites and incantation.
5. “True” magicians often attacked other magicians who did not perform the rites and liturgies correctly. These were called charlatans or deceivers (cf. Acts 13:6,8; 19:13).
6. The power of the gospel is seen in Paul’s ministry in Ephesus, where former magicians converted to faith in Christ burned their expensive magic books (i.e. how to properly perform incantations, rites and liturgies, cf. Acts 19:19).
7. For further reading
  - a. Susan Garrett, *The Demise of the Devil*, Fortress Press, 1989
  - b. Merrill Unger, *Biblical Demonology*, Scripture Press, 1967
  - c. Hendrik Berkhof, *Christ and the Powers*, Herald Press, 1977
  - d. Waller Wink, *Naming the Powers*, Fortress Press, 1984
  - e. Clinton Arnold, *Three Crucial Questions About Spiritual Warfare*, Baker, 1997

## SPECIAL TOPIC: MOSES’ AUTHORSHIP OF THE PENTATEUCH

- A. The Bible itself does not name the author (as is true of many OT books). Genesis has no “I” sections like Ezra, Nehemiah, or “we” sections like Acts.
- B. Jewish tradition
  1. Ancient Jewish writers say Moses wrote it
    - a. Ben Sirah’s *Ecclesiasticus*, 24:23, written about 185 B.C.
    - b. The *Baba Bathra* 14b, a part of the Talmud which gives traditional authorship of OT books
    - c. Philo of Alexandria, Egypt, a Jewish philosopher, living about 20 B.C. to A.D. 42
    - d. Flavius Josephus, a Jewish historian, living about A.D. 37-70
  2. YHWH reveals truth to Moses
    - a. Moses is said to have written for the people
      - (1) Exodus 17:14
      - (2) Exodus 24:4, 7
      - (3) Exodus 34:27, 28
      - (4) Numbers 33:2
      - (5) Deuteronomy 31:9, 22, 24-26
    - b. God is said to have spoken through Moses to the people
      - (1) Deuteronomy 5:4-5, 22
      - (2) Deuteronomy 6:1
      - (3) Deuteronomy 10:1

- c. Moses is said to have spoken the words of the Torah to the people
  - (1) Deuteronomy 1:1, 3
  - (2) Deuteronomy 5:1
  - (3) Deuteronomy 27:1
  - (4) Deuteronomy 29:2
  - (5) Deuteronomy 31:1, 30
  - (6) Deuteronomy 32:44
  - (7) Deuteronomy 33:1
3. OT authors attribute it to Moses
  - a. Joshua 8:31
  - b. II Kings 14:6
  - c. Ezra 6:18
  - d. Nehemiah 8:1; 13:1-2
  - e. II Chronicles 25:4; 34:12; 35:12
  - f. Daniel 9:11
  - g. Malachi 4:4
- C. Christian tradition
  1. Jesus attributes quotes from the Torah to Moses
    - a. Matthew 8:4; 19:8
    - b. Mark 1:44; 7:10; 10:5; 12:26
    - c. Luke 5:14; 16:31; 20:37; 24:27, 44
    - d. John 5:46-47; 7:19, 23
  2. Other N.T. authors attribute quotes from the Torah to Moses
    - a. Luke 2:22
    - b. Acts 3:22; 13:39; 15:1, 15-21; 26:22; 28:23
    - c. Romans 10:5, 19
    - d. I Corinthians 9:9
    - e. II Corinthians 3:15
    - f. Hebrews 10:28
    - g. Revelation 15:3
  3. Most early Church Fathers accepted Mosaic authorship. However, Ireneaus, Clement of Alexandria, Origen and Tertullian all had questions about Moses' relationship to the current canonical form of Genesis (cf. D. 2. on page 3).
- D. Modern Scholarship
  1. There have obviously been some editorial additions to the Torah (seemingly to make the ancient work more understandable to contemporary readers, which was a characteristic of Egyptian scribes):
    - a. Genesis 12:6; 13:7; 14:14; 21:34; 32:32; 36:31; 47:11
    - b. Exodus 11:3; 16:36
    - c. Numbers 12:3; 13:22; 15:22-23; 21:14-15; 32:33ff
    - d. Deuteronomy 3:14; 34:6
  2. Ancient scribes were highly trained and educated. Their techniques, however, differed from country to country:
    - a. In Mesopotamia, they were careful not to change anything, and even checked their works for accuracy. Here is an ancient Sumerian scribal footnote from about 1400 B.C.: "the work is complete from beginning to end, has been copied, revised, compared, and verified sign by sign."
    - b. In Egypt they freely revised ancient texts to update them for contemporary readers. The scribes at Qumran (i.e. Dead Sea Scrolls) followed this approach.
  3. Scholars of the 19th century theorized that the Torah is a composite document from many sources over an extended period of time (Graf-Wellhausen). This theory was based on:
    - a. the different names for God
    - b. apparent doublets in the text
    - c. the literary form of the accounts
    - d. the theology of the accounts
  4. Supposed sources and dates
    - a. J source (use of YHWH from southern Israel) - 950 B.C.
    - b. E source (use of Elohim from northern Israel) - 850 B.C.
    - c. JE combined - 750 B.C.
    - d. D source - 621 B.C. (The Book of the Law, II Kgs. 22:8, discovered during Josiah's reform while remodeling the Temple was supposedly the book of Deuteronomy, written by an unknown priest of Josiah's time to support his reform.).
    - e. P source (priestly rewrite of OT, especially ritual and procedure) - 400 B.C.

5. There have obviously been editorial additions to the Torah. The Jews assert that it was
  - a. The High Priest (or another of his family) at the time of the writing
  - b. Jeremiah the Prophet
  - c. Ezra the Scribe - IV Esdras says he rewrote it because the originals were destroyed in the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C.
6. However, the J. E. D. P. theory says more about our modern literary theories and categories than evidence from the Torah (R. K. Harrison, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, pp. 495-541 and *Tyndale's Commentaries*, "Leviticus," pp. 15-25).
7. Characteristics of Hebrew Literature
  - a. Doublets, like Gen. 1 & 2, are common in Hebrew. Usually a general description is given, followed by a specific account. This may have been a way to accent truths or help oral memory.
  - b. The ancient rabbis said the two most common names for God have theological significance:
    - (1) YHWH - the Covenant name for deity as He relates to Israel as Savior and Redeemer (cf. Ps. 19:7-14; 103).
    - (2) Elohim - deity as Creator, Provider, and Sustainer of all life on earth (cf. Ps. 19:1-6; 104).
  - c. It is common in non-biblical near eastern literature for a variety of styles and vocabulary to occur in unified literary works (cf. R. K. Harrison, pp. 522-526).
8. There is an emerging theory that there were scribes (in different parts of Israel) working on different parts of the Pentateuch at the same time under the direction of Samuel (cf. I Sam. 10:25). This theory was first proposed by E. Robertson's *The Old Testament Problem*.
- E. The evidence from ancient Near Eastern literature implies that Moses used written cuneiform documents or Mesopotamian style (patriarchal) oral traditions to write Genesis. This in no way means to imply a lessening of inspiration, but is an attempt to explain the literary phenomenon of the book of Genesis (cf. P. J. Wiseman's *New Discoveries in Babylonia about Genesis*).  
Beginning in Gen. 37, a marked Egyptian influence of style, form and vocabulary seems to indicate Moses used either literary productions or oral traditions from the Israelites' days in both Egypt and Mesopotamia. Moses' formal education was entirely Egyptian! The exact literary formation of the Pentateuch is uncertain. I believe that Moses is the compiler and author of the vast majority of the Pentateuch, though he may have used scribes and/or written and oral (patriarchal) traditions. His writings have been updated by later scribes. The historicity and trustworthiness of these first few books of the OT have been illustrated by modern archaeology.

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: THE LOCATION OF MT. SINAI

- A. If Moses was speaking literally and not figuratively of the "three day journey" he requested of Pharaoh (3:18; 5:3; 8:27), that was not a long enough time for them to get to the traditional site in the southern Sinai peninsula. Therefore, some scholars place the mountain near the oasis of Kadesh-Barnea.
- B. The traditional site called "Jebel Musa," in the Wilderness of Sin, has several things in its favor.
  1. A large plain before the mountain.
  2. Deuteronomy 1:2 says it was an eleven day journey from Mt. Sinai to Kadesh-Barnea.
  3. The term "Sinai" is a non-Hebrew term. It may be linked to the Wilderness of Sin, which refers to a small desert bush. The Hebrew name for the mountain is Horeb (i.e. wilderness).
  4. Mt. Sinai has been the traditional site since the fourth century A.D. It is in the "land of Midian," which included a large area of the Sinai peninsula and Arabia.
  5. It seems that archaeology has confirmed the location of some of the cities mentioned in the Exodus account (*Elim*, *Dophkah*, *Rephidim*) as being on the western side of the Sinai Peninsula.
- C. The Jews were never interested in the geographical location of Mt. Sinai. They believed that God gave them the Law and fulfilled His promise from Gen. 15:12-21. "Where" was not the issue and they did not intend to return to this site (i.e. no annual pilgrimage).
- D. The traditional site of Mt. Sinai was not established until *Pilgrimage of Silvia*, written about A.D. 385-8 (cf. F. F. Bruce, *Commentary on the Book of the Acts*, p. 151).
- E. There is much speculation today on a new possible location across the Gulf of Aqaba in Arabia. It is claimed
  1. that the land of Midian was always exclusively in Arabia
  2. that in Gal. 4:25 Paul states it was in Arabia
  3. that satellite mapping has revealed an ancient road leading from Egypt across the Sinai peninsula with a raised, rocky ledge, which crosses the Gulf of Aqaba
  4. that the top of the highest peak in this area is blackened (cf. Exod. 19:16,18)

It must be restated that we simply do not know the location!

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: MYSTERY

- A. In the Synoptic Gospels “mystery” is used of the spiritual insights gleaned from Jesus’ parables.
  - 1. Mark 4:11
  - 2. Matthew 13:11
  - 3. Luke 8:10
- B. Paul uses it in several different ways.
  - 1. A partial hardening of Israel to allow Gentiles to be included. This influx of Gentiles will work as a mechanism for Jews to accept Jesus as the Christ of prophecy (cf. Rom. 11:25-32).
  - 2. The gospel made known to the nations, telling them that they are all included in Christ and through Christ (cf. Rom. 16:25-27; Col. 2:2).
  - 3. Believers’ new bodies at the Second Coming (cf. I Cor. 15:5-57; I Thess. 4:13-18).
  - 4. The summing up of all things in Christ (cf. Eph. 1:8-11).
  - 5. The Gentiles and Jews are fellow-heirs (cf. Eph. 2:11-3:13).
  - 6. Intimacy of the relationship between Christ and the Church described in marriage terms (cf. Eph. 5:22-33).
  - 7. Gentiles included in the covenant people and indwelt by the Spirit of Christ so as to produce Christlike maturity, that is, restore the marred image of God in man (cf. Gen. 1:26-27; 5:1; 6:5,11-13; 8:21; 9:6; Col. 1:26-28).
  - 8. The end time Anti-Christ (cf. II Thess. 2:1-11).
  - 9. An early church summary of the mystery found in I Tim. 1:16.
- C. In John’s Revelation it is used of the meaning of John’s apocalyptic symbols.
  - 1. 1:20
  - 2. 10:7
  - 3. 17:5,6
- D. These are truths that men cannot discover; they must be revealed by God. These insights are crucial for a true understanding of God’s eternal plan for the redemption of all people (cf. Gen. 3:15).

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: GOD’S PLAN FOR REDEMPTION, “MYSTERY”

God has a unified purpose for mankind’s redemption that even preceded the fall (cf. Gen. 3). Hints of this plan are revealed in the OT (cf. Gen. 3:15; 12:3; Exod. 19:5-6; and the universal passages in the prophets). However this full agenda was not clear (cf. I Cor. 2:6-8; Col. 1:26). With the coming of Jesus and the Spirit it begins to become more obvious. Paul used the term “mystery” to describe this total redemptive plan (cf. I Cor. 4:1; Eph. 6:19; Col. 4:3; I Tim. 1:9). However, he used it in several different senses:

- 1. A partial hardening of Israel to allow Gentiles to be included. This influx of Gentiles will work as a mechanism (jealousy) for Jews to accept Jesus as the Messiah of prophecy (cf. Rom. 11:25-32).
- 2. The gospel was made known to the nations, all of whom are included in Christ and through Christ (cf. Rom. 16:25-27; Col. 2:2).
- 3. Believers’ new bodies at the Second Coming (cf. I Cor. 15:5-57; I Thess. 4:13-18).
- 4. The summing up of all things in Christ (cf. Eph. 1:8-11)
- 5. The Gentiles and Jews are fellow-heirs (cf. Eph. 2:11-3:13)
- 6. Intimacy of the relationship between Christ and the Church described in marriage terms (cf. Eph. 5:22-33)
- 7. Gentiles included in the covenant people and indwelt by the Spirit of Christ so as to produce Christlike maturity, that is, restore the marred image of God in fallen humanity (cf. Gen. 1:26-27; 5:1; 6:5,11-13; 9:6; Col. 1:26-28).
- 8. The end time Anti-Christ (cf. II Thess. 2:1-11)
- 9. An early church summary of the mystery is found in I Tim. 1:16

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: THE NAME OF THE LORD

This was a common NT phrase for the personal presence and active power of the Triune God in the church. It was not a magical formula, but an appeal to God’s character.

Often this phrase refers to Jesus as Lord (cf. Phil. 2:11)

- 1. at the profession of one’s faith in Jesus at baptism (cf. Rom. 10:9-13; Acts 2:38; 8:12,16; 10:48; 19:5; 22:16; I Cor. 1:13,15; James 2:7)
- 2. at an exorcism (cf. Matt. 7:22; Mark 9:38; Luke 9:49; 10:17; Acts 19:13)

3. at a healing (cf. Acts 3:6,16; 4:10; 9:34; James 5:14)
4. at an act of ministry (cf. Matt. 10:42; 18:5; Luke 9:48)
5. at the time of church discipline (cf. Matt. 18:15-20)
6. during preaching to Gentiles (cf. Luke 24:47; Acts 9:15; 15:17; Rom. 1:5)
7. in prayer (cf. John 14:13-14; 15:2,16; 16:23; I Cor. 1:2)
8. a way of referring to Christianity (cf. Acts 26:9; I Cor. 1:10; II Tim. 2:19; James 2:7; I Pet. 4:14)

Whatever we do as proclaimers, ministers, helpers, healers, exorcists, etc., we do in His character, His power, His provisions—in His Name!

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: NATURAL RESOURCES

### I. Introduction

- A. All creation is the backdrop or stage for God's love affair with mankind.
- B. It shares in the fall (cf. Gen. 3:17; 6:1ff; Rom. 8:18-20). Also, it will share in eschatological redemption (cf. Isa. 11:6-9; Rom. 8:20-22; Rev. 21-22).
- C. Sinful, fallen mankind has raped the natural environment with selfish abandon. Following is a quote from *The Canon of Westminster* by Edward Carpenter.
 

“. . .man's relentless assault, in a global context, upon the universe around him—that is on God's creation—an attack on the air which he pollutes; the natural waterways which he befouls; the soil which he poisons; the forests which he hews down, heedless of the long-term affects of this wanton destruction. This attack is piecemeal and uncoordinated. Scant regard is paid to any balance of nature and consequently little sense of responsibility for what one generation owes to another.”
- D. Not only are we reaping the result of pollution and exploitation of our planet, but our posterity will reap even more severe, non-reversible consequences.

### II. Biblical Material

#### A. Old Testament

1. Genesis 1-3
  - a. Creation is a special place created by God for fellowship with mankind (cf. Gen. 1:1-25).
  - b. Creation is good (cf. Gen. 1:4,10,12,18,21,25), yea, very good (cf. Gen. 1:31). It is meant to be a witness to God (cf. Ps. 19:1-16).
  - c. Humanity is the crowning purpose of creation (cf. Gen. 1:26-27).
  - d. Humanity was meant to exercise dominion (Hebrew, “to tread”) as a steward to God (cf. Gen. 1:28-30; Ps. 8:3-8; Heb. 2:6-8). God is and remains the Creator/Sustainer/ Redeemer/Lord of creation (cf. Exod. 19:5; Job 37-41; Ps. 24:1-2; 95:3-5; 102:25; 115:15; 121:2; 124:8; 134:3; 146:6; Isa. 37:16).
  - e. Mankind's stewardship of creation can be seen in Gen. 2:15, “to cultivate it and preserve and protect it” (cf. Lev. 25:23; I Chron. 29:14).
2. God loves creation, especially animals.
  - a. Mosaic laws for proper treatment of animals
  - b. YHWH playing with Leviathan (cf. Ps. 104:26)
  - c. God cares for animals (cf. Jonah 4:11)
  - d. Eschatological presence of nature (cf. Isa. 11:6-9; Rev. 21-22)
3. Nature, to some extent, glorifies God.
  - a. Psalm 19:1-6
  - b. Psalm 29:1-9
  - c. Job 37-41
4. Nature is one means by which God shows His love and loyalty to the covenant.
  - a. Deut. 27-28; I Kings 17
  - b. Throughout the prophets

#### B. New Testament

1. God is seen as creator. There is only one Creator, the Triune God (Elohim, Gen. 1:1; the Spirit, Gen. 1:2; and Jesus, the NT). All else is created.
  - a. Acts 17:24
  - b. Hebrews 11:3
  - c. Revelation 4:11
2. Jesus is God's agent of creation
  - a. John 1:3,10
  - b. I Corinthians 8:6



- c. Colossians 1:16
- d. Hebrews 1:2
- 3. Jesus speaks of God's care for nature in an indirect way in His sermons
  - a. Matthew 6:26,28-30, birds of the air and lilies of the field
  - b. Matthew 10:29, sparrows
- 4. Paul asserts that all humans are responsible for their knowledge of God in creation (i.e natural revelation, cf. Rom. 1:19-20; Rev. 21-22).

### III. Conclusion

- A. We are bound to this natural order!
- B. Sinful mankind has abused God's gift of nature as they have all the other good gifts of God.
- C. This natural order is temporal. It is going to pass away (II Pet. 3:7). God is moving our world to a historical nexus. Sin will run its course, but God has determined its bounds. Creation will be redeemed (cf. Rom. 8:18-25).

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: JESUS THE NAZARENE

There are several different Greek terms that the NT uses to precisely designate which Jesus.

### A. NT Terms

- 1. Nazareth - the city in Galilee (cf. Luke 1:26; 2:4,39,51; 4:16; Acts 10:38). This city is not mentioned in contemporary sources, but has been found in later inscriptions.  
For Jesus to be from Nazareth was not a compliment (cf. John 1:46). The sign over Jesus' cross which included this place name was a sign of Jewish contempt.
- 2. *Nazarēnos* - seems to also refer to a geographical location (cf. Luke 4:34; 24:19).
- 3. *Nazōraios* - may refer to a city, but could also be a play on the Hebrew Messianic term "Branch" (*netzer*, cf. Isa. 4:2; 11:1; 53:2; Jer. 23:5; 33:15; Zech. 3:8; 6:12). Luke uses this of Jesus in 18:37 and Acts 2:22; 3:6; 4:10; 6:14; 22:8; 24:5; 26:9.

### B. Historical usages outside the NT. This designation has other historical usages.

- 1. It denoted a Jewish (pre-Christian) heretical group.
- 2. It was used in Jewish circles to describe believers in Christ (cf. Acts 24:5,14; 28:22).
- 3. It became the regular term to denote believers in the Syrian (Aramaic) churches. "Christian" was used in the Greek churches to denote believers.
- 4. Sometime after the fall of Jerusalem, the Pharisees reorganized at Jamnia and instigated a formal separation between the synagogue and the church. An example of the type of curse formulas against Christians is found in "the Eighteen Benedictions" from *Berakoth* 28b-29a, which calls the believers "Nazarenes."  
"May the Nazarenes and heretics disappear in a moment; they shall be erased from the book of life and not be written with the faithful."

- C. Author's Opinion I am surprised by so many spellings of the term, although I know this is not unheard of in the OT as "Joshua" has several different spellings in Hebrew. Yet, because of the (1) close association with the Messianic term "Branch"; (2) combined with the negative connotation; (3) little or no contemporary attestation to the city of Nazareth in Galilee causes me to remain uncertain as to its precise meaning; and (4) it coming from the mouth of a demon in an eschatological sense (i.e. "Have you come to destroy us?").

For a full bibliography of studies of this word group by scholarship see Colin Brown (ed.), *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, vol. 2, p. 346.

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: NAZARITE VOW

### A. Its Purpose

This was a way for someone, male or female (cf. Num. 6:1), who was not of the tribe of Levi, to dedicate himself or herself to God's service (i.e. "holy to the Lord"). Nazarite means "one separated," which is the root idea of the Hebrew term holy.

### B. In the OT it was a life-long vow

- 1. Samson (Jdgs. 13:7)
- 2. Samuel (I Sam. 1:21)
- 3. John the Baptist

- C. Judaism developed a short-term Nazarite vow (probably developed from the words in Num. 6:5). The shortest length was thirty days. This

short-term vow culminated in the shaving of the head and burning of the shavings along with a sacrifice at the temple.

D. The specific requirements (cf. Numb. 6:1-8)

1. Abstain from wine and strong drink, eat no product of the vine (cf. Num. 6:3-4)
2. Do not cut one's hair.
3. Do not touch a dead person. This would make it impossible to participate in any of the Jewish funeral procedures.
4. A provision for accidental defilement is in Num. 6:9. Apparently Paul's situation in Acts 21:23-25 involved this issue. There was a period of purification and a sacrifice prescribed (cf. Num. 6:9-12).

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## **SPECIAL TOPIC: THE NEED TO PERSEVERE**

The biblical doctrines related to the Christian life are difficult to explain because they are presented in typically eastern dialectical pairs. These pairs seem contradictory, yet both are biblical. Western Christians have tended to choose one truth and ignore or depreciate the opposite truth. Let me illustrate.

1. Is salvation an initial decision to trust Christ or a lifetime commitment to discipleship?
2. Is salvation an election by means of grace from a sovereign God or mankind's believing and repentant response to a divine offer?
3. Is salvation, once received, impossible to lose, or is there a need for continual diligence?

The issue of perseverance has been contentious throughout church history. The problem begins with apparently conflicting passages of the NT:

1. texts on assurance
  - a. statements of Jesus (John 6:37; 10:28-29)
  - b. statements of Paul (Rom. 8:35-39; Eph. 1:13; 2:5,8-9; Phil. 1:6; 2:13; II Thess. 3:3; II Tim. 1:12; 4:18)
  - c. statements of Peter (I Pet. 1:4-5)
2. texts on the need for perseverance
  - a. statements of Jesus (Matt. 10:22; 13:1-9,24-30; 24:13; Mark 13:13; John 8:31; 15:4-10; Rev. 2:7,17,20; 3:5,12,21)
  - b. statements of Paul (Rom. 11:22; I Cor. 15:2; II Cor. 13:5; Gal. 1:6; 3:4; 5:4; 6:9; Phil. 2:12; 3:18-20; Col. 1:23)
  - c. statements of the author of Hebrews (2:1; 3:6,14; 4:14; 6:11)
  - d. statements of John (I John 2:6; II John 9)
  - e. statement of the Father (Rev. 21:7)

Biblical salvation issues from the love, mercy, and grace of a sovereign Triune God. No human can be saved without the initiation of the Spirit (cf. John 6:44,65). Deity comes first and sets the agenda, but demands that humans respond in faith and repentance, both initially and continually. God works with mankind in a covenant relationship. There are privileges and responsibilities!

Salvation is offered to all humans. Jesus' death dealt with the fallen creation's sin problem. God has provided a way and wants all those made in His image to respond to His love and provision in Jesus.

If you would like to read more on this subject from a non-Calvinistic perspective, see

1. Dale Moody, *The Word of Truth*, Eerdmans, 1981 (pp. 348-365)
2. Howard Marshall, *Kept by the Power of God*, Bethany Fellowship, 1969
3. Robert Shank, *Life in the Son*, Westcott, 1961

The Bible addresses two different problems in this area: (1) taking assurance as a license to live fruitless, selfish lives and (2) encouraging those who struggle with ministry and personal sin. The problem is that the wrong groups are taking the wrong message and building theological systems on limited biblical passages. Some Christians desperately need the message of assurance, while others need the stern warnings! Which group are you in?

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## **SPECIAL TOPIC: NT TERMS FOR CHRIST'S RETURN**

This is literally "until the *Parousia*," which means "presence" and was used of a royal visit. The other NT terms used for the Second Coming are (1) *epiphaneia*, "face to face appearing"; (2) *apokalypsis*, "unveiling"; and (3) "the Day of the Lord" and the variations of this phrase. The antecedent to "Lord" in this passage is both YHWH, as in vv. 10 and 11, and Jesus in vv. 7,8,14. This grammatical ambiguity was a common technique of NT authors to assert the deity of Jesus.

The NT as a whole is written within the world-view of the OT, which asserted

1. a current evil, rebellious age
2. a coming new age of righteousness
3. brought about by the Spirit's agency through the work of the Messiah (Anointed One)

The theological assumption of progressive revelation is required because the NT authors slightly modify Israel's expectation. Instead of a

military, nationalistic-focused (Israel) coming of the Messiah, there are two comings. The first coming was the incarnation of deity in the conception and birth of Jesus of Nazareth. He came as the non-military, non-judicial “suffering servant” of Isa. 53; also the mild rider on the colt of a donkey (not a war horse or kingly mule), of Zech. 9:9. The first coming inaugurated the New Messianic Age, the Kingdom of God on earth. In one sense the Kingdom is here, but of course, in another it is still far off. It is this tension between the two comings of the Messiah which, in a sense, is the overlapping of the two Jewish ages that was unseen, or at least unclear, from the OT. In reality, this dual coming emphasizes YHWH’s commitment to redeem all humanity (cf. Gen. 3:15; 12:3; Exod. 19:5 and the preaching of the prophets, especially Isaiah and Jonah).

The church is not waiting for the fulfillment of OT prophecy because most prophecies refer to the first coming (cf. *How to Read the Bible For All Its Worth*, pp. 165-166). What believers do anticipate is the glorious coming of the resurrected King of Kings and Lord of Lords, the expected historical fulfillment of the new age of righteousness on earth as it is in heaven (cf. Matt. 6:10). The OT presentations were not inaccurate, but incomplete. He will come again just as the prophets predicted in the power and authority of YHWH.

The Second Coming is not a biblical term, but the concept forms the world-view and framework of the entire NT. God will set it all straight. Fellowship between God and mankind made in His image will be restored. Evil will be judged and removed. God’s purposes will not, cannot, fail!

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## **SPECIAL TOPIC: ILLEGALITIES OF THE SANHEDRIN’S NIGHT TRIAL**

- A. No capital trials were to be held at night.
- B. A capital trial and punishment must not occur on the same day.
- C. No trials were to be held on a feast day or the eve of a feast.
- D. This particular morning was reserved for the saying of phylacteries (cf. Deut. 6:8; 11:18)
- E. This morning was also the time of the offering of gifts in the Temple (cf. Exod. 23:15).

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## **SPECIAL TOPIC: NULL AND VOID ( *KATARGEŌ* )**

This (*katargeō*) was one of Paul’s favorite words. He used it at least twenty-five times but it has a very wide semantic range.

- A. It’s basic etymological root is from *argos* which meant
  - 1. Inactive
  - 2. Idle
  - 3. Unused
  - 4. Useless
  - 5. Inoperative
- B. The compound with *kata* was used to express
  - 1. Inactivity
  - 2. Uselessness
  - 3. That which was cancelled
  - 4. That which was done away with
  - 5. That which was completely inoperative
- C. It is used once in Luke to describe a fruitless, therefore useless, tree (cf. Luke 13:7).
- D. Paul uses it in a figurative sense in two primary ways:
  - 1. God making inoperative things which are hostile to mankind
    - a. Mankind’s sin nature - Rom. 6:6
    - b. The Mosaic law in relation to God’s promise of “the seed” - Rom. 4:14; Gal. 3:17; 5:4,11; Eph. 2:15
    - c. Spiritual forces - I Cor. 15:24
    - d. The “man of lawlessness” - II Thess. 2:8
    - e. Physical death - I Cor. 15:26; II Tim. 1:16 (Heb. 2:14)
  - 2. God replacing the old (covenant, age) for the new
    - a. Things related to the Mosaic Law - Rom. 3:3,31; 4:14; II Cor. 3:7,11,13,14
    - b. Analogy of marriage used of Law - Rom. 7:2,6
    - c. The things of this age - I Cor. 13:8,10,11
    - d. This body - I Cor. 6:13
    - e. Leaders of this age - I Cor. 1:28; 2:6

This word is translated so many different ways but its main meaning is to make something useless, null and void, inoperative, powerless but not

necessarily non-existent, destroyed or annihilated.

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: INTERPRETING PARABLES

The Gospels were written many years after Jesus' life. The Gospel writers (by the aid of the Spirit) were culturally accustomed to oral tradition. The rabbis taught by oral presentation. Jesus mimicked this oral approach to teaching. To our knowledge He never wrote down any of His teachings or sermons. To aid in the memory, teaching presentations were repeated, summarized and illustrated. The Gospel writers retained these memory aids. Parables are one of these techniques. Parables are hard to define:

"Parables are best defined as stories with two levels of meaning; the story level provides a mirror by which reality is perceived and understood." taken from *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*, p. 594

"A parable is a saying or story that seeks to drive home a point that the speaker wishes to emphasize by illustrating it from a familiar situation of common life." taken from *The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Encyclopedia*, p. 590

It is hard to define exactly what was understood by the term "parable" in Jesus' day

1. Some say it reflects the Hebrew term *mashal*, which was any kind of riddle (Mark 3:23), clever saying (Proverbs, Luke 4:23), short saying (Mark 7:15) or mysterious saying ("dark saying").
2. Others hold to a more limited definition of a short story.

Depending on how one defines the term, over one-third of Jesus' recorded teachings are in parabolic form. This was a major NT literary genre. Parables are certainly authentic sayings of Jesus. If one accepts the second definition, there are still several different types of short stories

1. simple stories (Luke 13:6-9)
2. complex stories (Luke 15:11-32)
3. contrasting stories (Luke 16:1-8; 18:1-8)
4. typological/allegorical (Matt. 13:24-30, 47-50; Luke 8:4-8, 11-15; 10:25-37; 14:16-24; 20:9-19; John 10; 15:1-8)

In dealing with this variety of parabolic material one must interpret these sayings on several levels. The first level would be general hermeneutic principles applicable to all biblical genres. Some guidelines are:

1. identify the purpose of the entire book or at least the larger literary unit
2. identify the original audience. It is significant that often the same parable is given to different groups, example:
  - a. lost sheep in Luke 15 directed to sinners
  - b. lost sheep in Matt. 18 directed toward disciples
3. be sure to note the immediate context of the parable. Often Jesus or the gospel writer tells the main point (usually at the end of the parable or immediately after it).
4. express the central intent(s) of the parable in one declarative sentence. Parables often have two or three main characters. Usually there is an implied truth, purpose or point (plot) to each character.
5. check the parallel passages in the other Gospels, then other NT books and OT books.

The second level of interpretive principles are those that relate specifically to parabolic material

1. Read (hear if possible) the parable again and again. These were given for oral impact, not written analysis.
2. Most parables have only one central truth which is related to the historical and literary contexts of both Jesus and/or the evangelist.
3. Be careful of interpreting the details. Often they are just part of the setting of the story.
4. Remember parables are not reality. They are life-like analogies, but often exaggerations, to drive home a point (truth).
5. Identify the main points of the story that a first century Jewish audience would have understood. Then look for the twist or surprise. Usually it comes toward the end of the story (cf. A. Berkeley Mickelsen, *Interpreting the Bible*, pp. 221-224).
6. All parables were given to elicit a response. That response is usually related to the concept of "the Kingdom of God." Jesus was the inaugurator of the new Messianic Kingdom (Matt. 21:31; Luke 17:21). Those who heard Him must respond to Him now! The Kingdom was also future (Matt. 25). A person's future was dependent on how he responded to Jesus at the time. Kingdom parables described the new kingdom that had arrived in Jesus. They described its ethical and radical demands for discipleship. Nothing can be as it was. All is radically new and focused on Jesus!
7. Parables often do not express the point or central truth. The interpreter must seek the contextual keys that reveal the originally culturally obvious central truths but now obscure to us.

A third level that is often controversial is that of the hiddenness of parabolic truth. Jesus often spoke of the hiddenness of parables (cf. Matt. 13:9-15; Mark 4:9-13; Luke 8:8-10; Jn. 10:6; 16:25). This was related to the prophecy in Isa. 6:9-10. The heart of the hearer determines the level of understanding (cf. Matt. 11:15; 13:9,15,16,43; Mark 4:9,23,33-34; 7:16; 8:18; Luke 8:8; 9:44; 14:35).

However, it must also be stated that often the crowd (Matt. 15:10; Mark 7:14) and the Pharisees (Matt. 21:45; Mark 12:12; Luke 20:19) understood exactly what Jesus was saying but refused to respond appropriately to it by faith and repentance. In one sense this is the truth of the Parable of the Soils (Matt. 13; Mark 4; Luke 8).

The parables were a means to conceal or reveal truth (Matt. 13:16-17; 16:12; 17:13; Luke 8:10; 10:23-24).

Grant Osborne, in his *Hermeneutical Spiral*, p. 239, makes the point that “parables are an ‘encounter mechanism’ and function differently depending on the audience. . . Each group (leaders, crowds, disciples) is encountered differently by the parables.” Often even the disciples did not understand either His parables or His teachings (cf. Matt. 15:16; Mark 6:52; 8:17-18,21; 9:32; Luke 9:45; 18:34; John 12:16).

A fourth level is also controversial. It deals with the central truth of parables. Most modern interpreters have reacted (justifiably so) to the allegorical interpretation of the parables. Allegory turned the details into elaborate systems of truth. This method of interpretation did not focus on the historical setting, literary setting or authorial intent, but presented the thought of the interpreter, not the text.

However, it must be admitted that the parables that Jesus interpreted are very close to allegorical or at least typological. Jesus used the details to convey truth (the Sower, Matt. 13; Mark 4; Luke 8 and the wicked tenants, Matt. 21; Mark 12, Luke 20).

Some of the other parables also have several main truths. A good example is the parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32). It is not only the love of the Father and waywardness of the younger son but the attitude of the older son that is integral to the full meaning of the parable.

A helpful quote from *Linguistics and Biblical Interpretation* by Peter Cotterell and Max Turner,

“It was Adolf Julicher more than any other who directed New Testament scholarship towards a decisive attempt to understand the role of parable in the teaching of Jesus. The radical allegorizing of the parables was abandoned and the search begun for a key that would enable us to penetrate their true meaning. But as Jeremias made clear, ‘His efforts to free the parables from the fantastic and arbitrary interpretations of every detail caused him to fall into a fatal error.’ The

error was to insist not merely that a parable should be understood as conveying a single idea, but that the idea should be as general as possible” (p. 308).

Another helpful quote from *The Hermeneutical Spiral* by Grant Osborne,

“Yet I have noted many indications that the parables are indeed allegories, albeit controlled by the author’s intention. Blomberg (1990) in fact argues that there are as many points as there are characters in the parables and that they are indeed allegories. While this is somewhat overstated, it is nearer the truth than the ‘one point’ approach” (p. 240).

Should parables be used to teach doctrinal truths or illuminate doctrinal truths? Most interpreters have been influenced by the abuse of the allegorical method of interpreting parables which allowed them to be used to establish doctrines that had no connection to Jesus’ original intent nor that of the gospel writer. Meaning must be linked to authorial intent. Jesus and the gospel writers were under inspiration, but interpreters are not.

However badly the parables have been abused they still function as teaching vehicles of truth, doctrinal truth. Hear Bernard Ramm on this point.

“Parables do teach doctrine and the claim that they may not be used at all in doctrinal writing is improper...we must check our results with plain, evident teaching of our Lord, and with the rest of the New Testament. Parables with proper cautions may be used to illustrate doctrine, illuminate Christian experience and to teach practical lessons.” *Protestant Biblical Interpretation*” (p. 285).

In conclusion let me give three quotes that reflect warnings in our interpretation of parables:

1. Taken from *How to Read the Bible For All Its Worth* by Gordon Fee and Doug Stuart:  
“The parables have suffered a fate of misinterpretation in the church second only to the Revelation” (p. 135).
2. Taken from *Understanding and Applying the Bible* by J. Robertson McQuilkin,  
“Parables have been the source of untold blessing in enlightening God’s people concerning spiritual truth. At the same time, parables have been the source of untold confusion in both doctrine and practice in the church” (p. 164).
3. Taken from *The Hermeneutical Spiral* by Grant Osborne,  
“Parables have been among the most written about yet hermeneutically abused portions of Scripture. . . the most dynamic yet the most difficult to comprehend of the biblical genres. The potential of the parable for communication is enormous, since it creates a comparison or story based upon everyday experiences. However, that story itself is capable of many meanings, and the modern reader has as much difficulty interpreting it as did the ancient hearers” (p. 235).

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## **SPECIAL TOPIC: ORDER OF PASSOVER SERVICE IN FIRST CENTURY JUDAISM**

- A. Prayer
- B. Cup of wine
- C. Hand washing by host and passing of basin to all
- D. Dip of bitter herbs and sauce
- E. Lamb and main meal
- F. Prayer and second dip of bitter herbs and sauce
- G. Second cup of wine with question-and-answer time for children (cf. Exod. 12:26-27)
- H. Singing of the first part of Hallel Psalm 113-114 and prayer
- I. Master of ceremony makes sop for each one after washing his hands
- J. All eat until filled; finish with a piece of lamb
- K. Third cup of wine after washing hands
- L. Singing second part of Hallel Psalm 115-118

M. Fourth cup of wine

Many believe that the institution of the Lord's Supper occurred at "K."

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### SPECIAL TOPIC: PAUL'S ADMONITIONS TO SLAVES

1. Be content, but if an opportunity for freedom avails itself, take it (I Cor. 7:21-24)
2. In Christ there is no slave or free (Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:11; cf. I Cor. 12:13)
3. Work as unto the Lord; He will repay (Eph. 6:5-9; Col. 3:22-25; cf. I Pet. 2:18-20)
4. In Christ slaves become brothers (I Tim. 6:2; Philemon vv. 16-17)
5. Godly slaves bring honor to God (I Tim. 6:1; Titus 2:9)

#### Paul's admonition to slave owners:

Christian slaves and slave owners have the same master; therefore, they should treat each other with respect (Eph. 6:9; Col. 4:1)

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### COMMON ELEMENTS OF PAUL'S DEFENSE

Common Elements	Paul before Mob	Paul before Sanhedrin	Paul before Felix	Paul before Festus	Paul before Agrippa II
1. His Jewish Background	22:3		24:14,17-18		26:4
2. His Pharisaic training and zeal	22:3	23:6-9	24:15,21		26:5-8
3. His Persecution of "The Way"	22:4-5				26:9-11
4. His Personal testimony of his conversion	22:6-16				26:12-16
5. His Call to specific ministry by God	22:17-22				26:17-23

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### SPECIAL TOPIC: PAUL'S PRAISE, PRAYER, AND THANKSGIVING TO GOD

Paul was a man of praise. He knew the Old Testament. Each of the first four divisions (i.e. books) of the Psalter end with doxologies (cf. Ps. 41:13; 72:19; 89:52; 106:48). He praises and extols God in several different ways.

1. opening paragraphs in his letters
  - a. opening benedictions or greetings (cf. Rom. 1:7; I Cor. 1:3; II Cor. 1:2)
  - b. opening blessings (*eulogētos*, cf. II Cor. 1:3-4; Eph. 1:3-14)
2. short outbursts of praise
  - a. Rom. 1:25; 9:5
  - b. II Cor. 11:31
3. doxologies (characterized by use of (1) *doxa* (i.e. glory) and (2) "for ever and ever")
  - a. Rom. 11:36; 16:25
  - b. Eph. 3:20-21
  - c. Phil. 4:20



- d. I Tim. 1:17
- e. II Tim. 4:18
- 4. thanksgivings (i.e. *eucharisteō*)
  - a. letter openings (cf. Rom. 1:8; I Cor. 1:4; II Cor. 1:11; Eph. 1:16; Phil. 1:3; Col. 1:3,12; I Thess. 1:2; II Thess. 1:3; Philemon v. 4; I Tim. 1:12; II Tim. 1:3)
  - b. call to give thanks (cf. Eph. 5:4,20; Phil. 4:6; Col. 3:15,17; 4:2; I Thess. 5:18)
- 5. short outbursts of thanksgiving
  - a. Rom. 6:17; 7:25
  - b. I Cor. 15:57
  - c. II Cor. 2:14; 8:16; 9:15
  - d. I Thess. 2:13
  - e. II Thess. 2:13
- 6. closing benedictions
  - a. Rom. 16:20,24(?)
  - b. I Cor. 16:24
  - c. II Cor. 13:14
  - d. Gal. 6:18
  - e. Eph. 6:24

Paul knew the Triune God theologically and experientially. In his writings he starts out with prayer and praise. In the middle of his presentations he breaks out in praise and thanksgiving. At the conclusion to his letters, he always remembers to pray, praise and thank God. Paul's writing breathes with prayer, praise, and thanksgiving. He knew God, he knew himself, and he knew the gospel.

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: PAUL'S USE OF "HUPER" COMPOUNDS

Paul had a special fondness for creating new words using the Greek PREPOSITION *huper*, which basically means "over" or "upper." When used with the GENITIVE (ABLATIVE) it means "in behalf of." It can also mean "about" or "concerning," like *peri* (cf. II Cor. 8:23; II Thess. 2:1. When used with the ACCUSATIVE it means "above," "over," or "beyond" (cf. A. T. Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research*, pp. 625-633. When Paul wanted to accentuate a concept he used this PREPOSITION in a compound.

Here is a list of Paul's special use of this PREPOSITION in compounds.

- A. *Hapax legomenon* (used only once in the NT)
  - 1. *Huperakmos*, one past the prime of life, I Cor. 7:36
  - 2. *Huperauxanō*, to increase exceedingly, II Thess. 1:3
  - 3. *Huperbainō*, to overstep or transgress, I Thess. 4:6
  - 4. *Huperkeina*, beyond, II Cor. 10:16
  - 5. *Huperekteina*, overextend, II cor. 10:14
  - 6. *Huperentugchanō*, to intercede, Rom. 8:26
  - 7. *Hupernikaōō*, to be abundantly victorious, Rom. 8:37
  - 8. *Huperpleonazō*, to be in exceeding abundance, I Tim. 1:14
  - 9. *Huperupsoōō*, to exalt supremely, Phil. 2:9
  - 10. *Huperphroneō*, to have lofty thoughts, Rom. 12:3
- b. Words used only in Paul's writings.
  - a. *Huperairomai*, to exalt oneself, II Cor. 12:7; II Thess. 2:4
  - b. *Huperballontō s*, above measure, exceedingly, II Cor. 11:23; (ADVERB only here, but VERB in II Cor. 3:10; 9:14; Eph. 1:19; 2:7; 3:19)
  - c. *Huperbolē*, an overshooting, an extraordinary armoring (?), Rom. 7:13; I Cor. 12:31; II Cor. 1:8; 4:7,17; 22:7; Gal. 1:13
  - d. *Huperekperissou*, beyond all measure, Eph. 3:20; I Thess. 3:10; 5:13
  - e. *Huperlian*, in the highest degree or pre-eminently, II cor. 11:5; 12:11
  - f. *Huperochē*, prominence, excellence, I Cor. 2:1; I Tim. 2:2
  - g. *Huperperisseuō*, to super abound, Rom. 5:20 (MIDDLE VOICE, to be abundantly filled, overflowing, II Cor. 7:4)
- c. Words used by Paul and ruarely in other NT writers
  - a. *Huperanō*, far above, Eph. 1:21; 4:10; and Heb. 9:5)
  - b. *Huperechō*, excellence, pre-eminence, Rom. 13:1; Phil. 2:3; 3:8; 4:7; I Pet. 2:13
  - c. *Huperēphanos*, assuming or haughty, Rom. 1:30; II Tim. 3:2 and Luke 1:51; James 4:6; I Pet. 5:5.



Paul was a man of great passion; when things or people were good, they were very good and when they were bad, they were very bad. This PREPOSITION allowed him to express his superlative feelings about sin, self, and Christ and the Gospel.

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## **SPECIAL TOPIC: PAUL'S VIEWS OF THE MOSAIC LAW**

- A. It is good and from God (cf. Rom. 7:12,16).
- B. It is not the way to righteousness and acceptance by God (it can even be a curse, cf. Gal. 3).
- C. it is still God's will for believers because it is God's self-revelation (Paul often quotes the OT to convict and/or encourage believers).
- D. Believers are informed by the OT (cf. Rom. 4:23-24; 15:4; I Cor. 10:6,11), but not saved by the OT (cf. Acts 15; Rom. 4; Gal. 3; Hebrews).
- E. It functions in the new covenant to.
  - 1. show sinfulness (cf. Gal. 3:15-29)
  - 2. guide redeemed mankind in society
  - 3. inform Christian ethical decisions

It is this theological spectrum from cursing and passing away to blessing and permanency that causes the problem in trying to understand Paul's view of the Mosaic Law. In *A Man in Christ*, James Stewart shows Paul's paradoxical thinking and writing:

"You would normally expect a man who was setting himself to construct a system of thought and doctrine to fix as rigidly as possible the meanings of the terms he employed. You would expect him to aim at precision in the phraseology of his leading ideas. You would demand that a word, once used by your writer in a particular sense, should bear that sense throughout. But to look for this from Paul is to be disappointed. Much of his phraseology is fluid, not rigid. . . 'The

law is holy' he writes, 'I delight in the law of God after the inward man' (cf. Rom. 7:12,22) but it is clearly another aspect of *nomos* that makes him say elsewhere, 'Christ had redeemed us from the curse of the law (cf. Gal. 3:13)" (p. 26).

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## **SPECIAL TOPIC: THE CHRISTIAN AND PEACE**

### **I. Introduction**

- A. The Bible, our sole source for faith and practice, has no definitive passage on peace. In fact, it is paradoxical in its presentation. The OT may be alluded to as an approach to peace which is militaristic. The NT, however, puts the conflict into spiritual terms of light and darkness.
- B. Biblical faith, as well as world religions of the past and present, sought and still expect, a golden age of prosperity which is absent from conflict.
  - 1. Isaiah 2:2-4; 11:6-9; 32:15-18; 51:3; Hosea 2:18; Micah 4:3
  - 2. Biblical faith prophesies the personal agency of the Messiah, Isa. 9:6-7
- C. However, how do we live in a world of conflict? There have been three basic Christian responses which have developed chronologically between the death of the Apostles and the Middle Ages.
  - 1. Pacifism, although rare in antiquity, it was the early church's response to the Roman military society.
  - 2. Just war, after the conversion of Constantine (313 A.D.) the church began to rationalize the military support of a "Christian state" in response to successive Barbarian invasions. This was basically the classical Greek position. This position was first articulated by Ambrose and expanded and developed by Augustine.
  - 3. Crusade, this is similar to the Holy War concept of the OT. It developed in the Middle Ages in response to the Muslim advances in the "Holy Land" and ancient Christian territories such as North Africa, Asia Minor, and the Eastern Roman Empire. It was not on behalf of the state, but on behalf of the Church and under its auspices.
  - 4. All three of these views developed in a Christian context with differing views on how Christians should relate to a fallen world system. Each emphasized certain Bible texts to the exclusion of others. Pacifism tended to separate itself from the world. The "Just War" response has advocated the power of the state to control an evil world (Martin Luther). The Crusade position has advocated that the Church attack the fallen world system so as to control it.
  - 5. Roland H. Bainton, in his book, *Christian Attitudes Toward War and Peace*, published by Abingdon, page 15, says,
    - "The Reformation precipitated wars of religion, in which the three historic positions reappeared: the just war among the Lutherans and the Anglicans, the crusade in the Reformed Churches, and pacifism among the Anabaptists and later the Quakers. The eighteenth century in theory and in practice resuscitated the humanist peace ideals of the Renaissance. The nineteenth century was an age of comparative peace and great agitation for the elimination of war. The twentieth century has seen two world wars. In this period again, the three historic positions have recurred. The churches in the United States particularly took a crusading attitude toward the First

World War; pacifism was prevalent between the two wars; the mood of the Second World War approximated that of the just war.”

D. The exact definition of “peace” has been disputed.

1. For the Greeks it seems to refer to a society of order and coherence.
2. For the Romans it was the absence of conflict brought about through the power of the state.
3. For the Hebrews peace was a gift of YHWH based on mankind’s proper response to Him. It was usually put in agricultural terms (cf. Deut. 27-28). Not only prosperity, but divine security and protection are included.

## II. Biblical Material

### A. Old Testament

1. Holy War is a basic concept of the OT. The phrase “kill not” of Exod. 20:13 and Deut. 5:17 in Hebrew refers to premeditated murder, not death by accident or passion or war. YHWH is even seen as a warrior on behalf of His people (cf. Joshua - Judges and Isa. 59:17, alluded to in Eph. 6:14).
2. God even uses war as a means of punishing His wayward people - Assyria exiles Israel (A.D. 722 ); Neo-Babylon exiles Judah (586 B.C.).

### B. New Testament

1. In the Gospels soldiers are mentioned without condemnation. The Roman “centurians” are mentioned often and almost always in a noble sense.
2. Even believing soldiers are not commanded to give up their vocation (early church)
3. The New Testament does not advocate a detailed answer to social evils in terms of political theory or action, but in spiritual redemption. The focus is not on physical battles, but on the spiritual battle between light and dark, goodness and evil, love and hate, God and Satan (Eph. 6:10-17).
4. Peace is an attitude of the heart amidst the problems of the world. It is related solely to our relationship with Christ (Rom. 5:1; John 14:27), not the state. The peacemakers of Matt. 5:9 are not political, but proclaimers of the gospel! Fellowship, not strife, should characterize the Church life, not to itself and to a lost world.

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: PERSONAL EVIL

This is a very difficult subject for several reasons

1. The OT does not reveal an archenemy to good, but a servant of YHWH who offers mankind an alternative and accuses mankind of unrighteousness.
2. The concept of a personal archenemy of God developed in the inter-biblical (non-canonical) literature under the influence of Persian religion (*Zoroastrianism*). This, in turn, greatly influenced rabbinical Judaism.
3. The NT develops the OT themes in surprisingly stark, but selective, categories.

If one approaches the study of evil from the perspective of biblical theology (each book or author or genre studied and outlined separately), then very different views of evil are revealed.

If, however, one approaches the study of evil from a non-biblical or extra-biblical approach of world religions or eastern religions, then much of the NT development is foreshadowed in Persian dualism and Greco-Roman spiritism.

If one is presuppositionally committed to the divine authority of Scripture, then the NT development must be seen as progressive revelation. Christians must guard against allowing Jewish folk lore or western literature (i.e. Dante, Milton) to define the biblical concept. There is certainly mystery and ambiguity in this area of revelation. God has chosen not to reveal all aspects of evil, its origin, its purpose, but He has revealed its defeat!

In the OT the term Satan or accuser seems to relate to three separate groups

1. human accusers (I Sam. 29:4; II Sam. 19:22; I Kgs. 11:14,23,25; Ps. 109:6)
2. angelic accusers (Num. 22:22-23; Zech. 3:1)
3. demonic accusers (I Chr. 21:1; I Kgs. 22:21; Zech. 13:2)

Only later in the intertestamental period is the serpent of Gen. 3 identified with Satan (cf. Book of Wisdom 2:23-24; II Enoch 31:3), and not until even later does this become a rabbinical option (cf. *Sot* 9b and *Sanh.* 29a). The “sons of God” of Gen. 6 become angels in I Enoch 54:6. I mention this, not to assert its theological accuracy, but to show its development. In the NT these OT activities are attributed to angelic, personified evil (i.e. Satan) in II Cor. 11:3; Rev. 12:9.

The origin of personified evil is difficult or impossible (depending on your point of view) to determine from the OT. One reason for this is Israel’s strong monotheism (cf. I Kgs. 22:20-22; Eccl. 7:14; Isa. 45:7; Amos 3:6). All causality was attributed to YHWH to demonstrate His uniqueness and primacy (cf. Isa. 43:11; 44:6,8,24; 45:5-6,14,18,21,22).

Sources of possible information focus on (1) Job 1-2 where Satan is one of the “sons of God” (i.e. angels) or (2) Isa. 14; Ezek. 28 where prideful near eastern kings (Babylon and Tyre) are used to illustrate the pride of Satan (cf. I Tim. 3:6). I have mixed emotions about this approach. Ezekiel

uses Garden of Eden metaphors not only for the king of Tyre as Satan (cf. Ezek. 28:12-16), but also for the king of Egypt as the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil (Ezek. 31). However, Isa. 14, particularly vv. 12-14, seems to describe an angelic revolt through pride. If God wanted to reveal to us the specific nature and origin of Satan this is a very oblique way and place to do it. We must guard against the trend of systematic theology of taking small, ambiguous parts of different testaments, authors, books, and genres and combining them as pieces of one divine puzzle.

Alfred Edersheim (*The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, vol. 2, appendices XIII [pp. 748-763] and XVI [pp. 770-776]) says that Rabbinical Judaism has been overly influenced by Persian dualism and demonic speculation. The rabbis are not a good source for truth in this area. Jesus radically diverges from the teachings of the Synagogue. I think that the rabbinical concept of angelic mediation and opposition in the giving of the law to Moses on Mt. Sinai opened the door to the concept of an arch-angelic enemy of YHWH as well as mankind. The two high gods of Iranian (Zoroastrian) dualism, *Ahkiman* and *Ormaza*, good and evil, and this dualism developed into a Judaic limited dualism of YHWH and Satan.

There is surely progressive revelation in the NT as to the development of evil, but not as elaborate as the rabbis proclaim. A good example of this difference is the “war in heaven.” The fall of Satan is a logical necessity, but the specifics are not given. Even what is given is veiled in apocalyptic genre (cf. Rev. 12:4,7,12-13). Although Satan is defeated and exiled to earth, he still functions as a servant of YHWH (cf. Matt. 4:1; Luke 22:31-32; I Cor. 5:5; I Tim. 1:20).

We must curb our curiosity in this area. There is a personal force of temptation and evil, but there is still only one God and mankind is still responsible for his/her choices. There is a spiritual battle, both before and after salvation. Victory can only come and remain in and through the Triune God. Evil has been defeated and will be removed!

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: PERSEVERANCE

The biblical doctrines related to the Christian life are difficult to explain because they are presented in typically eastern, dialectical pairs. These pairs seem contradictory, yet both poles are biblical. Western Christians have tended to choose one truth and ignore or depreciate the opposite truth.

1. Is salvation an initial decision to trust Christ or a life-time commitment to discipleship?
2. Is salvation an election by means of grace from a sovereign God or a faith and repentant response on mankind's part to a divine offer?
3. Is salvation, once received, impossible to lose, or is there a need for continual diligence?

The issue of perseverance has been contentious throughout church history. The problem starts with seemingly conflicting passages of the NT.

1. texts on assurance
  - a. statements of Jesus in John's Gospel (John 6:37; 10:28-29)
  - b. statements of Paul (Rom. 8:35-39; Eph. 1:13; 2:5,8-9; Phil. 1:6; 2:13; II Thess. 3:3; II Tim. 1:12; 4:18)
  - c. statements of Peter (I Pet. 1:4-5)
2. texts on the need for perseverance
  - a. statements of Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels (Matt. 10:22; 13:1-9,24-30; 24:13; Mark 13:13)
  - b. statements of Jesus in John's Gospel (John 8:31; 15:4-10)
  - c. statements of Paul (Rom. 11:22; I Cor. 15:2; II Cor. 13:5; Gal. 1:6; 3:4; 5:4; 6:9; Phil. 2:12; 3:18-20; Col. 1:23; II Tim. 3:2)
  - d. statements of the author of Hebrews (2:1; 3:6,14; 4:14; 6:11)
  - e. statements of John (I John 2:6; II John 9; Rev. 2:7,17,20; 3:5,12,21; 21:7)

Biblical salvation issues from the love, mercy, and grace of a sovereign Triune God. No human can be saved without the initiation of the Spirit. Deity comes first and sets the agenda, but demands that humans must respond in faith and repentance, both initially and continually. God works with mankind in a covenant relationship. There are privileges and responsibilities!

Salvation is offered to all humans. Jesus' death dealt with the sin problem of the fallen creation! God has provided a way and wants all those made in His image to respond to His love and provision in Jesus.

If you would like to read more on this subject see

1. Dale Moody, *The Word of Truth*, Eerdmans, 1981 (pp. 348-365)
2. Howard Marshall, *Kept by the Power of God*, Bethany Fellowship, 1969
3. Robert Shank, *Life in the Son*, Westcott, 1961

The Bible addresses two different problems in this area: (1) taking assurance as a license to live fruitless, selfish lives or (2) encouraging those who struggle with ministry and personal sin. The problem is that the wrong groups are taking the wrong message and building theological systems on limited biblical passages. Some Christians desperately need the message of assurance, while others need the stern warnings of perseverance! Which group are you in?

There is a historical theological controversy involving Augustine versus Pelagius and Calvin versus Arminius (semi-Pelagian). The issue involves the question of salvation: if one is truly saved, must he persevere in faith and fruit?

The Calvinists line up behind those biblical texts that assert God's sovereignty and keeping-power (John 10:27-30; Rom. 8:31-39; I John 5:13,18; I Pet. 1:3-5) and VERB TENSES like the PERFECT PASSIVE PARTICIPLES of Eph. 2:5,8.

The Arminians line up behind those biblical texts that warn believers to “hold on,” “hold out,” or “continue” (Matt. 10:22; 24:9-13; Mark 13:13; John 15:4-6; I Cor. 15:2; Gal. 6:9; Rev. 2:7,11,17,26; 3:5,12,21; 21:7). I personally do not believe that Heb. 6 and 10 are applicable, but many Arminians use them as a warning against apostasy. The parable of the Sower in Matt. 13 and Mark 4 addresses the issue of apparent belief, as does

John 8:31-59. As Calvinists quote the PERFECT TENSE VERBS used to describe salvation, the Arminians quote the PRESENT TENSE passages like I Cor. 1:18; 15:2; II Cor. 2:15.

This is a perfect example of how theological systems abuse the proof-texting method of interpretation. Usually a guiding principle or chief text is used to construct a theological grid by which all other texts are viewed. Be careful of grids from any source. They come from western logic, not revelation. The Bible is an eastern book. It presents truth in tension-filled, seemingly paradoxical pairs. Christians are meant to affirm both and live within the tension. The NT presents both the security of the believer and the demand for continuing faith and godliness. Christianity is an initial response of repentance and faith followed by a continuing response of repentance and faith. Salvation is not a product (a ticket to heaven or a fire insurance policy), but a relationship. It is a decision and discipleship. It is described in the NT in all VERB TENSES:

AORIST (completed action), Acts 15:11; Rom. 8:24; II Tim. 1:9; Titus 3:5

PERFECT (completed action with continuing results), Eph. 2:5,8

PRESENT (continuing action), I Cor. 1:18; 15:2; II Cor. 2:15

FUTURE (future events or certain events), Rom. 5:8,10; 10:9; I Cor. 3:15; Phil. 1:28; I Thess. 5:8-9; Heb. 1:14; 9:28

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: PETER, THE MAN

### I. HIS FAMILY

- A. Peter's family lived in Galilee of the Gentiles in the city of Bethsaida on the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee (or the Sea of Tiberias cf. John 1:44), but apparently moved to Capernaum at some point (cf. Mark 1:21,29).
- B. Peter's father's name was Jonah (cf. Matt. 16:17) or John (cf. John 1:42; 21:15-17).
- C. His given name was Simon (cf. Mark 1:16,29,30,36), which was common in Palestine of the first century. It was the Jewish form of Symeon (cf. Acts 15:14; II Pet. 1:1).  
Jesus renamed him Peter (*Petros*, which means "rock," meant to describe his eventual strength and stability) in Matt. 16:18; Mark 3:16; Luke 6:14; and John 1:42. The Aramaic form is *Cephas* (cf. John 1:42; I Cor. 1:12; 3:22; 9:5; 15:5; Gal. 1:18; 2:9,11,14). Often in the NT these two names are given together (cf. Matt. 16:16; Luke 5:8; John 1:40; 6:8,68; 13:6,9,24,36; 18:10,15,25; 20:2,6; 21:2-3,7,11,15).
- D. Peter's brother's name was Andrew (cf. Mark 1:16). He was a disciple of John the Baptist (cf. John 1:35,40) and later a believer and follower of Jesus (cf. John 1:36-37). He brought Simon to Jesus (cf. John 1:41). Several months later Jesus confronted them by the Sea of Galilee and called them to be His official full-time disciples (cf. Matt. 4:18-20; Mark 1:16-18; and Luke 5:1-11).
- E. He was married (cf. Mark 1:30; I Cor. 9:5), but there is no mention of children.

### II. HIS OCCUPATION

- A. Peter's family owned several fishing boats and even hired servants.
- B. Peter's family may have been partners with James, John, and their father, Zebedee (cf. Luke 5:10).
- C. Peter briefly returned to fishing after Jesus' death (cf. John 21).

### III. HIS PERSONALITY

- A. Peter's strengths
  1. He was a dedicated follower, but quite impulsive (cf. Mark 9:5; John 13:4-11).
  2. He attempted acts of faith, but often failed (e.g. walking on water, cf. Matt. 14:28-31).
  3. He was brave and willing to die (cf. Matt. 26:51-52; Mark 14:47; Luke 22:49-51; John 18:10-11).
  4. After His resurrection, Jesus addressed him personally as the discredited leader of the Twelve in John 21 and provided an opportunity for repentance and restoration to leadership.
- B. Peter's weaknesses
  1. He had initial tendencies toward Jewish legalism
    - a. eating with Gentiles (Gal. 2:11-21)
    - b. food laws (Acts 10:9-16)
  2. He, like all the Apostles, did not fully understand Jesus' radical new teachings and their implications
    - a. Mark 9:5-6
    - b. John 13:6-11; 18:10-11
  3. He was personally and severely chastised by Jesus (Mark 8:33; Matt. 16:23)
  4. He was found sleeping instead of praying in Jesus' great hour of need in Gethsemane (Mark. 14:32-42; Matt. 26:36-46; Luke 22:40-60)
  5. He repeatedly denied knowing Jesus (Mark 14:66-72; Matt. 26:69-75; Luke 22:56-62; John 18:16-18,25-27)

### IV. HIS LEADERSHIP OF THE APOSTOLIC GROUP

- A. There are four lists of the Apostles (cf. Matt. 10:2-4; Mark 3:16-19; Luke 6:14-16; Acts 1:13). Peter is always listed first. The Twelve were divided into three groups of four. I believe this allowed them to rotate home to check on their families.
- B. Peter often serves as the spokesman for the Apostolic group (cf. Matt. 16:13-20; Mark 8:27-30; Luke 9:18-21). These passages have also been used to assert Peter's authority within the group (cf. Matt. 16:18). However, within this very context he is chided by Jesus as a tool of Satan (cf. Matt. 16:23; Mark 8:33).

Also, when the disciples are arguing over who is greatest, Peter is not assumed to take that position (cf. Matt. 20:20-28, especially v. 24; Mark 9:33-37; 10:35-45).

- C. Peter was not the leader of the Jerusalem church. This fell to James, Jesus' half-brother (cf. Acts 12:17; 15:13; 21:18; I Cor. 15:7; Gal. 1:19; 2:9,12).

## V. HIS MINISTRY AFTER JESUS' RESURRECTION

- A. Peter's leadership role is clearly seen in the early chapters of Acts.
1. He led in the election of Judas' replacement (cf. Acts 1:15-26).
  2. He preached the first sermon on Pentecost (cf. Acts 2).
  3. He healed a lame man and preached the second recorded sermon (cf. Acts 3:1-10; 3:11-26).
  4. He spoke boldly to the Sanhedrin in Acts 4.
  5. He presided over the church discipline of Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 5.
  6. He spoke at the Jerusalem Council in Acts 15:7-11.
  7. Several other events and miracles are attributed to him in Acts.
- B. Peter, however, did not always embody the gospel's implications.
1. He retained an OT mind-set (cf. Gal. 2:11-14).
  2. He had to have a special revelation to include Cornelius (cf. Acts 10) and other Gentiles.

## VI. THE SILENT YEARS

- A. There is little or no information about Peter after the Jerusalem Council of Acts 15.
1. Galatians 1:18
  2. Galatians 2:7-21
  3. I Corinthians 1:12; 3:22; 9:5; 15:5
- B. Early church tradition
1. Peter's being martyred in Rome is mentioned in Clement of Rome's letter to the church at Corinth in A.D. 95.
  2. Tertullian (A.D. 150-222) also notes Peter's martyrdom in Rome under Nero (A.D. 54-68).
  3. Clement of Alexandria (A.D. 200) says Peter was killed in Rome.
  4. Origen (A.D. 252) says Peter was martyred by crucifixion, head down, in Rome.

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: PHARISEES

- I. The term had one of the following possible origins:
- A. "To be separate." This group developed during the Macabean period. (This is the most widely accepted view).
  - B. "To divide." This is another meaning of the same Hebrew root. Some say it meant an interpreter (cf. II Tim. 2:15).
  - C. "Persian." This is another meaning of the same Aramaic root. Some of the doctrines of the Pharisees have much in common with Persian Zoroastrian dualism.
- II. They developed during the Macabean Period from the "*Hasidim*" (pious ones). Several different groups like the Essenes came out of the anti-Hellenistic reaction to Antiochus IV Epiphanes. The Pharisees are first mentioned in Josephus' *Antiquities of the Jews* 8.5.1-3.
- III. Their major doctrines.
- A. Belief in a coming Messiah, which was influenced by interbiblical Jewish apocalyptic literature like I Enoch.
  - B. God active in daily life. This was directly opposite from the Sadducees. Many of Pharisaic doctrines were theological counterpoint to the Sadducees' doctrines.
  - C. A physically oriented afterlife based on earthly life, which involved reward and punishment (cf. Dan. 12:2).
  - D. Authority of the OT and the Oral Traditions (*Talmud*). They were conscious of being obedient to the OT commands of God as they were interpreted and applied by schools of rabbinical scholars (Shammai, the conservative and Hillel, the liberal). The rabbinical interpretation was based on a dialogue between rabbis of two differing philosophies, one conservative and one liberal. These oral discussions over the meaning of Scripture were finally written down in two forms: the Babylonian Talmud and the incomplete Palestinian Talmud. They believed that Moses had received these oral interpretations on Mt. Sinai. The historical beginning of these discussions started with Ezra and the men of the "Great Synagogue" (later called the Sanhedrin).
  - E. Highly developed angelology. This involved both good and evil spiritual beings. This developed from Persian dualism and the interbiblical Jewish literature.

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: PONTIUS PILATE

- I. The Man
  - A. Place and time of birth unknown
  - B. Of the Equestrian order (upper middle class of Roman society)
  - C. Married, but no known children
  - D. Earlier administrative appointments (of which there must have been several) unknown
- II. His Personality.
  - A. Two different views
    - 1. Philo (*Legatio and Gaium*, 299-305) and Josephus (*Antiq.* 18.3.1 and *Jewish Wars* 2.9.2-4) depict him as a cruel and uncompassionate dictator.
    - 2. NT (Gospels, Acts) a weak, easily manipulated Roman procurator
  - B. Paul Barnett, *Jesus and the Rise of Early Christianity*, pp. 143-148 gives a plausible explanation of these two views.
    - 1. Pilate was not appointed procurator in A.D. 26 under Tiberius, who was pro-Jewish (cf. Philo, *Legatio and Gaium*, 160-161), but by Sejanus, Tiberius' anti-Jewish, chief advisor.
    - 2. Tiberius suffered a loss of political power to L. Aelius Sejanus, his praetorian prefect who became the real power behind the throne and who hated Jews (Philo, *Legatio and Gaium*, 159-160).
    - 3. Pilate was a protégée of Sejanus and tried to impress him by:
      - a. bringing Roman standards into Jerusalem (A.D. 26), which other procurators had not done. These symbols of Roman gods inflamed the Jews (cf. Josephus' *Antiq.* 18.3.1; *Jewish Wars* 2.9.2-3).
      - b. minting coins (A.D. 29-31) which had images of Roman worship engraved on them. Josephus says he was purposefully trying to overturn Jewish laws and customs (cf. Josephus, *Antiq.* 18.4.1-2).
      - c. taking money from the Temple treasury to build an aqueduct in Jerusalem (cf. Josephus, *Antiq.* 18.3.2; *Jewish Wars* 2.9.3).
      - d. having several Galileans killed while offering a sacrifice at Passover in Jerusalem (cf. Luke 13:12).
      - e. bringing Roman shields into Jerusalem in A.D. 31. Herod the Great's son appealed to him to remove them, but he would not, so they wrote Tiberius, who demanded they be removed back to Caesarea by the sea (cf. Philo, *Legatio and Gaium*, 299-305).
      - f. having many Samaritans slaughtered on Mt. Gerizim (A.D. 36/37) as they searched for sacred objects of their religion, which had been lost. This caused Pilate's local superior (Vitellius, Prefect of Syria) to remove him from office and send him to Rome (cf. Josephus, *Antiq.* 18.4.1-2).
      - g. Sejanus was executed in A.D. 31 and Tiberius was restored to full political power; therefore, #1,2,3, and 4 were possibly done by Pilate to earn Sejanus' trust. Numbers 5 and 6 could have been attempts to earn Tiberius' trust, but may have backfired.
      - h. It is obvious with a pro-Jewish emperor restored, plus an official letter to procurators from Tiberius to be kind to Jews (cf. Philo, *Legatio and Gaium*, 160-161), that the Jewish leadership in Jerusalem took advantage of Pilate's political vulnerability with Tiberius and manipulated him to have Jesus crucified. This theory of Barnett brings the two views of Pilate together in a plausible way.
- III. His Fate
  - A. He was recalled and arrived in Rome just after Tiberius' death (A.D. 37).
  - B. He was not reappointed.
  - C. His life is unknown after this. There are many later theories, but no secure facts.

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: EFFECTIVE PRAYER

- A. Related to one's personal relationship with the Triune God
  - 1. according to the Father's will
    - a. Matt. 6:10
    - b. I John 3:22
    - c. I John 5:14-15
  - 2. abiding in Jesus (John 15:7)
  - 3. praying in Jesus' name
    - a. John 14:13,14
    - b. John 15:16
    - c. John 16:23-24
  - 4. praying in the Spirit
    - a. Eph. 6:18
    - b. Jude 20

- B. Related to one's personal motives
  - 1. not wavering
    - a. Matt. 21:22
    - b. James 1:6-7
  - 2. asking amiss (James 4:3)
  - 3. asking selfishly (James 4:2-3)
- C. Related to one's personal choices
  - 1. perseverance
    - a. Luke 18:1-8
    - b. Colossians 4:2
    - c. James 5:16
  - 2. discord at home (I Peter 3:7)
  - 3. sin
    - a. Psalm 66:18
    - b. Isaiah 59:1-2
    - c. Isaiah 64:7

All prayer is answered, but not all prayer is effective. Prayer is a two-way relationship. The worst thing God could do is answer believers' inappropriate prayers.

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## **SPECIAL TOPIC: INTERCESSORY PRAYER**

- I. Introduction
  - A. Prayer is significant because of Jesus' example.
    - 1. personal prayer, Mark 1:35; Luke 3:21; 6:12; 9:29; 22:29-46
    - 2. cleansing of the Temple, Matt. 21:13; Mark 11:17; Luke 19:46
    - 3. Model Prayer, Matt. 6:5-13; Luke 11:2-4
  - B. Prayer is our putting into tangible action our belief in a personal, caring God who is present, willing, and able to act on our behalf and others'.
  - C. God has personally limited Himself to act on the prayers of His children in many areas (cf. James 4:2).
  - D. The major purpose of prayer is fellowship and time with the Triune God.
  - E. The scope of prayer is anything or anyone that concerns believers. We may pray once, believing, or over and over again as the thought or concern returns.
  - F. Prayer can involve several elements.
    - 1. praise and adoration of the Triune God
    - 2. thanksgiving to God for His presence, fellowship, and provisions
    - 3. confession of our sinfulness, both past and present
    - 4. petition of our sensed needs or desires
    - 5. intercession where we hold the needs of others before the Father
  - G. Intercessory prayer is a mystery. God loves those for whom we pray much more than we do, yet our prayers often effect a change, response, or need, not only in ourselves, but in them.
- II. Biblical Material
  - A. Old Testament
    - 1. Some examples of intercessory prayer
      - a. Abraham pleading for Sodom, Gen. 18:22ff
      - b. Moses' prayers for Israel
        - (1) Exodus 5:22-23
        - (2) Exodus 32:31ff
        - (3) Deuteronomy 5:5
        - (4) Deuteronomy 9:18,25ff
      - c. Samuel prays for Israel
        - (1) I Samuel 7:5-6,8-9
        - (2) I Samuel 12:16-23
        - (3) I Samuel 15:11
      - d. David prayed for his child, II Samuel 12:16-18



2. God is looking for intercessors, Isaiah 59:16
3. Known, unconfessed sin or an unrepentant attitude affects our prayers
  - a. Psalm 66:1
  - b. Proverbs 28:9
  - c. Isaiah 59:1-2; 64:7

#### B. New Testament

1. The Son and Spirit's intercessory ministry
  - a. Jesus
    - (1) Romans 8:34
    - (2) Hebrews 7:25
    - (3) I John 2:1
  - b. Holy Spirit, Romans 8:26-27
2. Paul's intercessory ministry
  - a. Prays for the Jews
    - (1) Romans 9:1ff
    - (2) Romans 10:1
  - b. Prays for the churches
    - (1) Romans 1:9
    - (2) Ephesians 1:16
    - (3) Philippians 1:3-4,9
    - (4) Colossians 1:3,9
    - (5) I Thessalonians 1:2-3
    - (6) II Thessalonians 1:11
    - (7) II Timothy 1:3
    - (8) Philemon, v. 4
  - c. Paul asked the churches to pray for him
    - (1) Romans 15:30
    - (2) II Corinthians 1:11
    - (3) Ephesians 6:19
    - (4) Colossians 4:3
    - (5) I Thessalonians 5:25
    - (6) II Thessalonians 3:1
3. The church's intercessory ministry
  - a. Prayer for one another
    - (1) Ephesians 6:18
    - (2) I Timothy 2:1
    - (3) James 5:16
  - b. Prayer requested for special groups
    - (1) our enemies, Matt. 5:44
    - (2) Christian workers, Hebrews 13:18
    - (3) rulers, I Timothy 2:2
    - (4) the sick, James 5:13-16
    - (5) backsliders, I John 5:16
  - c. Prayer for all men, I Timothy 2:1

#### III. Hindrances to an answered prayer

##### A. Our relationship to Christ and the Spirit

1. Abide in Him, John 15:7
2. In His name, John 14:13,14; 15:16; 16:23-24
3. In the Spirit, Ephesians 6:18; Jude 20
4. According to God's will, Matthew 6:10; I John 3:22; 5:14-15

##### B. Motives

1. Not wavering, Matthew 21:22; James 1:6-7
2. Humility and repentance, Luke 18:9-14
3. Asking amiss, James 4:3
4. Selfishness, James 4:2-3

##### C. Other aspects

- ##### A. Perseverance

- a. Luke 18:1-8
- b. Colossians 4:2
- c. James 5:16
- B. Kept on asking
  - a. Matthew 7:7-8
  - b. Luke 11:5-13
  - c. James 1:5
- 3. Discord at home, I Peter 3:7
- 4. Free from known sin
  - a. Psalm 66:18
  - b. Proverbs 28:9
  - c. Isaiah 59:1-2
  - d. Isaiah 64:7

#### IV. Theological Conclusion

- A. What a privilege! What an opportunity! What a duty and responsibility!
- B. Jesus is our example. The Spirit is our guide. The Father is eagerly waiting.
- C. It could change you, your family, your friends, and the world.

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## **SPECIAL TOPIC: PRAYER, UNLIMITED YET LIMITED**

- A. The Synoptic Gospels
  - 1. believers are encouraged to persevere in prayer and God will provide “good things” (Matt.) or “His Spirit” (Luke) Matt. 7:7-11; Luke 11:5-13)
  - 2. in the context of church discipline believers (two) are encouraged to unite in prayer (Matt. 18:19)
  - 3. in the context of the judgment of Judaism believers are to ask in faith without doubting (Matt. 21:22; Mark 11:23-24)
  - 4. in the context of two parables (vv. 1-8, the unrighteous judge and vv. 9-14, the Pharisee and the sinner) believers are encouraged to act differently from the godless judge and self-righteous Pharisee. God hears the humble and repentant (Luke 18:1-14)
- B. John’s writings
  - 1. in the context of the man born blind whom Jesus heals, the true blindness of the Pharisees is revealed. Jesus’ prayer (as anyone’s) are answered because He knew God and lived accordingly (John 9:31).
  - 2. John’s Upper Room Discourse (John 13-17)
    - a. 14:12-14 - believing prayer characterized by
      - 1) coming from believers
      - 2) asking in Jesus’ name
      - 3) desiring that the Father be glorified
      - 4) keeping commandments (v. 15)
    - b. 15:7-10 - believers prayer characterized by
      - 1) abiding in Jesus
      - 2) His word abiding in them
      - 3) desiring that the Father be glorified
      - 4) producing much fruit
      - 5) keeping commandments (v. 10)
    - c. 15:15-17 - believers’ prayer characterized by
      - 1) their election
      - 2) their fruit bearing
      - 3) asking in Jesus’ name
      - 4) keeping command to love one another
    - d. 16:23-24 - believers’ prayer characterized by
      - 1) asking in Jesus’ name
      - 2) desiring that joy be made full
  - 3. John’s first letter (I John)
    - a. 3:22-24 - believers’ prayer characterized by
      - 1) keeping His commandments (vv. 22,24)

- 2) living appropriately
- 3) believing in Jesus
- 4) loving one another
- 5) abiding in Him and He in us
- 6) having the gift of the Spirit
- b. 5:14-16 - believers' prayer characterized by
  - 1) confidence in God
  - 2) according to His will
  - 3) believers pray for each other

A. James

- 1. 1:5-7 - believers confronted with various trials are called on to ask for wisdom without doubting
- 2. 4:2-3 - believers must ask with proper motives
- 3. 5:13-18 - believers faced with health problems are encouraged
  - a. to ask elders to pray
  - b. to pray in faith will save
  - c. to ask that their sins will be forgiven
  - d. to confess sin to one another and pray for one another (similar to I John 5:16)

The key to effective prayer is Christlikeness. This is what praying in Jesus' name means. The worst thing God could do for most Christians is to answer their selfish prayers! In one sense all prayers are answered. The most valuable aspect of prayer is that the believer has spent time with God, trusting God.

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## **SPECIAL TOPIC: ELECTION/PREDESTINATION AND THE NEED FOR A THEOLOGICAL BALANCE**

Election is a wonderful doctrine. However, it is not a call to favoritism, but a call to be a channel, a tool or means of others' redemption! In the Old Testament the term was used primarily for service; in the New Testament it is used primarily for salvation which issues in service. The Bible never reconciles the seeming contradiction between God's sovereignty and mankind's free will, but affirms them both! A good example of the biblical tension would be Romans 9 on God's sovereign choice and Romans 10 on mankind's necessary response (cf. 10:11,13).

The key to this theological tension may be found in Ephesians 1:4. Jesus is God's elect man and all are potentially elect in Him (Karl Barth). Jesus is God's "yes" to fallen mankind's need (Karl Barth). Ephesians 1:4 also helps clarify the issue by asserting that the goal of predestination is not heaven, but holiness (Christlikeness). We are often attracted to the benefits of the gospel and ignore the responsibilities! God's call (election) is for time as well as eternity!

Doctrines come in relation to other truths, not as single, unrelated truths. A good analogy would be a constellation versus a single star. God presents truth in eastern, not western, genres. We must not remove the tension caused by dialectical (paradoxical) pairs of doctrinal truths (God as transcendent versus God as immanent, e.g. security vs. perseverance; Jesus as equal with the Father vs. Jesus as subservient to the Father; Christian freedom vs. Christian responsibility to a covenant partner; etc.).

The theological concept of "covenant" unites the sovereignty of God (who always takes the initiative and sets the agenda) with a mandatory initial and continuing repentant, faith response from humans (cf. Mark 1:15; Acts 3:16,19; 20:21). Be careful of proof-texting one side of the paradox and depreciating the other! Be careful of asserting only your favorite doctrine or system of theology!

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## **SPECIAL TOPIC: PREDESTINATION (CALVINISM) vs. HUMAN FREE WILL (ARMINIANISM)**

This passage is a balance to other NT passages on election. I thought it might be theologically helpful to provide my commentary notes from Rom. 8:29 and 9, as well as Eph. 1.

- I. Romans 8:29 - Paul uses "foreknew" (*proginōskō*, "to know before") twice, here and 11:2. In 11:2 it refers to God's covenant love for Israel before time began. Remember that the term "know" in Hebrew related to intimate, personal relationship, not to facts about someone (cf. Gen. 4:1; Jer. 1:5). Here it was included in a chain of eternal events (cf. Rom. 8:29-30). This term was linked with predestination. However, it must be stated that God's foreknowledge is not the basis of election because if that were so, then election would be based on fallen humanity's future response, which would be human performance. This term is also found in Acts 26:5; I Pet. 1:2,20 and II Pet. 3:17.
- A. "foreknew" (*proginōskō*, "to know before")

The terms "foreknow" or "predestine" are both compounds with the preposition "before" and therefore, should be translated "to know before," "to set bounds before," or "mark off before." The definitive passages on predestination in the NT are Rom. 8:28-30; Eph. 1:13-14; and Rom.

9. These texts obviously stress that God is sovereign. He is in total control of all things. There is a preset divine plan being worked out in time. However, this plan is not arbitrary or selective. It is based not only on God's sovereignty and foreknowledge, but on His unchanging character of love, mercy, and undeserved grace.

We must be careful of our western (American) individualism or our evangelical zeal coloring this wonderful truth. We must also guard against being polarized into the historical, theological conflicts between Augustine versus Pelagius or Calvinism versus Arminianism.

B. "predestined" (*proorizō*, "to set the bounds before")

Predestination is not a doctrine meant to limit God's love, grace, and mercy nor to exclude some from the gospel. It is meant to strengthen believers by molding their world-view. God is for all mankind (cf. I Tim. 2:4; II Pet. 3:9). God is in control of all things. Who or what can separate us from Him (cf. Rom. 8:31-39)? God views all history as present. Humans are time bound. Our perspective and mental abilities are limited. There is no contradiction between God's sovereignty and mankind's free will. It is a covenantal structure. This is another example of truth given in dialectical tension. Biblical doctrines are presented from different perspectives. They often appear paradoxical. The truth is a balance between the seemingly opposite pairs. We must not remove the tension by picking one of the truths. We must not isolate any biblical truth into a compartment by itself.

It is also important to add that the goal of election is not only heaven when we die, but Christlikeness now (cf. Rom. 8:29; Eph. 1:4; 2:10). We were chosen to be "holy and blameless." God chooses to change us so that others may see the change and respond by faith to God in Christ. Predestination is not a personal privilege, but a covenantal responsibility. This is the major truth of the passage. This is the goal of Christianity. Holiness is God's will for every believer. God's election is to Christlikeness (cf. Eph. 1:4), not a special standing. The image of God, which was given to man in creation (cf. Gen. 1:26; 5:1,3; 9:6), is to be restored.

C. "conformed to the image of His Son"—God's ultimate goal is the restoration of the image lost in the Fall. Believers are foreordained to Christlikeness (cf. Eph. 1:4).

## II. Romans 9

A. Chapter 9 is one of the strongest NT passages on God's sovereignty (the other being, Eph. 1:3-14), while Romans 10 states humans' free will clearly and repeatedly (cf. "everyone" v. 4; "whosoever" vv. 11,13; "all" v. 12 [twice]). Paul never tries to reconcile this theological tension. They are both true! Most Bible doctrines are presented in paradoxical or dialectical pairs. Most systems of theology are logical half-truths. Augustinianism and Calvinism versus semi-Pelagianism and Arminianism have elements of truth and error. Biblical tension between doctrines is preferable to a proof-texted, dogmatic, rational, theological system that forces the Bible onto a preconceived interpretive grid.

B. This same truth (found in Rom. 9:23) is stated in Rom. 8:29-30 and Eph. 1:4,11. This chapter is the strongest expression of God's sovereignty in the NT. There can be no dispute that God is in total charge of creation and redemption. This great truth should never be softened or diminished.

However, it must be balanced with God's choice of covenant as a means of relating to human creation, made in His image. It is surely true that some OT covenants, like Gen. 15, are unconditional and do not relate at all to human response, but other covenants are conditioned on human response (e.g. Eden, Noah, Moses, David). God has a plan of redemption for His creation;

no human can affect this plan. God has chosen to allow individuals to participate in His plans. This opportunity for participation is a theological tension between sovereignty (Rom. 9) and human free will (Rom. 10).

It is not appropriate to select one biblical emphasis and ignore another. There is tension between doctrines because eastern people present truth in dialectical or tension-filled pairs. Doctrines must be held in relationship to other doctrines. Truth is a mosaic of truths.

## III. Ephesians 1

A. Election is a wonderful doctrine. However, it is not a call to favoritism, but a call to be a channel, a tool or means of others' redemption! In the OT the term was used primarily for service; in the NT it is used primarily for salvation which issues in service. The Bible never reconciles the seeming contradiction between God's sovereignty and mankind's free will, but affirms them both! A good example of the biblical tension would be Romans 9 on God's sovereign choice and Romans 10 on mankind's necessary response (cf. 10:11,13).

The key to this theological tension may be found in 1:4. Jesus is God's elect man and all are potentially elect in Him (Karl Barth). Jesus is God's "yes" to fallen mankind's need (Karl Barth). Ephesians 1:4 also helps clarify the issue by asserting that the goal of predestination is not heaven only, but holiness (Christlikeness). We are often attracted to the benefits of the gospel and ignore the responsibilities! God's call (election) is for time as well as eternity!

Doctrines come in relation to other truths, not as single, unrelated truths. A good analogy would be a constellation versus a single star. God presents truth in eastern, not western, genres. We must not remove the tension caused by dialectical (paradoxical) pairs of doctrinal truths (God as transcendent versus God as immanent; security vs. perseverance; Jesus as equal with the Father vs. Jesus as subservient to the Father; Christian freedom vs. Christian responsibility to a covenant partner, etc).

The theological concept of "covenant" unites the sovereignty of God (who always takes the initiative and sets the agenda) with a mandatory initial and continuing repentant, faith response from man. Be careful of proof-texting one side of the paradox and depreciating the other! Be careful of asserting only your favorite doctrine or system of theology.

B. "He chose us" in Eph. 1:4 is an AORIST MIDDLE INDICATIVE which emphasizes the subject. This focuses on the Father's choice before time. God's choice must not be understood in the Islamic sense of determinism, nor in the ultra-Calvinistic sense as some versus others, but in the covenantal sense. God promised to redeem fallen mankind (cf. Gen. 3:15). God called and chose Abraham to choose all humans (cf. Gen. 12:3; Exod. 19:5-6). God Himself elected all persons who would exercise faith in Christ. God always takes the initiative in salvation (cf. John 6:44,65). This text and Rom. 9 are the biblical basis for the doctrine of predestination emphasized by Augustine and Calvin.

God chose believers not only to salvation (justification), but also to sanctification (cf. Col. 1:12). This could relate to (1) our position in Christ (cf. II Cor. 5:21) or (2) God's desire to reproduce His

character in His children (cf. 2:10; Rom. 8:28-29; Gal. 4:19). God's will for His children is both heaven one day and Christlikeness now!

"In Him" is a key concept of Eph. 1:4. The Father's blessings, grace, and salvation flow through Christ (cf. John 14:6). Notice the repetition of this grammatical form (LOCATIVE of sphere) in v. 3, "in Christ"; vs. 4, "in Him"; v. 7, "in Him"; v. 9, "in Him"; v. 10, "in Christ," "in Him"; v. 12, "in Christ" and v. 13, "in Him" (twice). Jesus is God's "yes" to fallen mankind (Karl Barth). Jesus is the elect man and all are potentially elect in Him. All of God the Father's blessings flow through Christ.

The phrase "before the foundation of the world" is also used in Matt. 25:34; John 17:24; I Pet. 1:19-20 and Rev. 13:8. It shows the Triune God's redemptive activity even before Gen. 1:1. Humans are limited by their sense of time; everything to us is past, present and future, but not to God.

The goal of predestination is holiness, not privilege. God's call is not to a selected few of Adam's children, but to all! It is a call to be what God intended mankind to be, like Himself (cf. I Thess. 5:23; II Thess. 2:13); in His image (cf. Gen. 1:26-27). To turn predestination into a theological tenet instead of a holy life is a tragedy. Often our theologies speak louder than the biblical text.

The term "blameless" (*amōmos*) or "free from blemish" is used of (1) Jesus (cf. Heb. 9:14; I Pet. 1:19); (2) Zachariah and Elizabeth (cf. Luke 1:6); (3) Paul (cf. Phil. 3:6); and (4) all true Christians (cf. Phil. 2:15; I Thess. 3:13; 5:23). God's unalterable will for every Christian is not only heaven later, but Christlikeness now (cf. Rom. 8:29-30; Gal. 4:19; I Pet. 1:2). Believers are to reflect God's characteristics to a lost world for the purpose of evangelism.

Grammatically the phrase "in love" in this verse could go with either v. 4 or v. 5. However, when this phrase is used in other places in Ephesians it always refers to human love for God (cf. 3:17; 4:2,15,16).

- C. In Eph. 1:5 the phrase "He predestined us" is an AORIST ACTIVE PARTICIPLE. This Greek term is a compound of "before" and "mark off." It refers to God's predetermined redemptive plan (cf. Luke 22:22; Acts 2:23; 4:28; 17:31; Rom. 8:29-30). Predestination is one of several truths related to mankind's salvation. It is part of a theological pattern or series of related truths. It was never meant to be emphasized in isolation! Biblical truth has been given in a series of tension-filled, paradoxical pairs. Denominationalism has tended to remove the biblical tension by emphasizing only one of the dialectical truths (predestination vs. human free will; security of the believer vs. perseverance of the saints; original sin vs. volitional sin; sinlessness vs. sinning less; instantaneously declared sanctification vs. progressive sanctification; faith vs. works; Christian freedom vs. Christian responsibility; transcendence vs. immanence).

God's choice is not based on foreknowledge of human performance, but on His gracious character (cf. vv. 9 & 11). He wishes that all (not just some special ones like the Gnostics or modern-day ultra-Calvinists) would be saved (cf. Ezek. 18:21-23,32; John 3:16-17; I Tim. 2:4; 4:10; Titus 2:11; II Pet. 3:9). God's grace (God's character) is the theological key to this passage (cf. vv. 6a, 7c, 9b), as God's mercy is the key to the other passage on predestination, Rom. 9-11.

Fallen mankind's only hope is the grace and mercy of God (cf. Isa. 53:6 and several other OT texts quoted in Rom. 3:9-18). It is crucial in interpreting these first theological chapters to realize that Paul emphasizes those things which are totally unrelated to human performance: predestination (chap. 1), grace (chap. 2), and God's eternal plan of redemption (mystery, 2:11-3:13). This was to counterbalance the emphasis of the false teachers on human merit and pride.

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: NEW TESTAMENT PROPHECY

- I. It is not the same as OT prophecy, which has the rabbinical connotation of inspired revelations from YHWH (cf. Acts 3:18,21; Rom. 16:26). Only prophets could write Scripture.
  - A. Moses was called a prophet (cf. Deut. 18:15-21).
  - B. History books (Joshua - Kings [except Ruth]) were called the "former prophets" (cf. Acts 3:24).
  - C. Prophets usurp the place of High Priest as the source of information from God (cf. Isaiah - Malachi [except Lamentations and Daniel]).
  - D. The second division of the Hebrew canon is "the Prophets" (cf. Matt. 5:17; 22:40; Luke 16:16; 24:25,27; Rom. 3:21).
- II. In the NT the concept is used in several different ways.
  - A. referring to OT prophets and their inspired message (cf. Matt. 2:23; 5:12; 11:13; 13:14; Rom. 1:2)
  - B. referring to a message for an individual rather than a corporate group (i.e. OT prophets spoke primarily to Israel)
  - C. referring to both John the Baptist (cf. Matt. 11:9; 14:5; 21:26; Luke 1:76) and Jesus as proclaimers of the Kingdom of God (cf. Matt. 13:57; 21:11,46; Luke 4:24; 7:16; 13:33; 24:19). Jesus also claimed to be greater than the prophets (cf. Matt. 11:9; 12:41; Luke 7:26).
  - D. other prophets in the NT
    1. early life of Jesus as recorded in Luke's Gospel (i.e. Mary's memories)
      - a. Elizabeth (cf. Luke 1:41-42)
      - b. Zacharias (cf. Luke 1:67-79)
      - c. Simeon (cf. Luke 2:25-35)
      - d. Anna (cf. Luke 2:36)
    2. ironic predictions (cf. Caiaphas, John 11:51)
  - E. referring to one who proclaims the gospel (the lists of proclaiming gifts in I Cor. 12:28-29; Eph. 4:11)
  - F. referring to an ongoing gift in the church (cf. Matt. 23:34; Acts 13:1; 15:32; Rom. 12:6; I Cor. 12:10,28-29; 13:2; Eph. 4:11). Sometimes

this can refer to women (cf. Luke 2:36; Acts 2:17; 21:9; I Cor. 11:4-5).

G. referring to the apocalyptic book of Revelation (cf. Rev. 1:3; 22:7,10,18,19)

### III. NT prophets

A. They do not give inspired revelation in the same sense as did the OT prophets (i.e. Scripture). This statement is possible because of the use of the phrase “the faith” (i.e. a sense of a completed gospel) used in Acts 6:7; 13:8; 14:22; Gal. 1:23; 3:23; 6:10; Phil. 1:27; Jude 3,20.

This concept is clear from the full phrase used in Jude 3, “the faith once and for all handed down to the saints.” The “once for all” faith refers to the truths, doctrines, concepts, world-view teachings of Christianity. This once-given emphasis is the biblical basis for theologically limiting inspiration to the writings of the NT and not allowing later or other writings to be considered revelatory. There are many ambiguous, uncertain, and grey areas in the NT, but believers affirm by faith that everything that is “needed” for faith and practice is included with sufficient clarity in the NT. This concept has been delineated in what is called “the revelatory triangle”<sup>1</sup>. God has revealed Himself in time-space history (REVELATION)

2. He has chosen certain human writers to document and explain His acts (INSPIRATION)

3. He has given His Spirit to open the minds and hearts of humans to understand these writings, not definitively, but adequately for salvation and an effective Christian life (ILLUMINATION)

The point of this is that inspiration is limited to the writers of Scripture. There are no further authoritative writings, visions, or revelations. The canon is closed. We have all the truth we need to respond appropriately to God.

This truth is best seen in the agreement of biblical writers versus the disagreement of sincere, godly believers. No modern writer or speaker has the level of divine leadership that the writers of Scripture did.

B. In some ways NT prophets are similar to OT prophets.

1. prediction of future events (cf. Paul, Acts 27:22; Agabus, Acts 11:27-28; 21:10-11; other unnamed prophets, Acts 20:23)

2. proclaim judgment (cf. Paul, Acts 13:11; 28:25-28)

3. symbolic acts which vividly portray an event (cf. Agabus, Acts 21:11)

C. They do proclaim the truths of the gospel sometimes in predictive ways (cf. Acts 11:27-28; 20:23; 21:10-11), but this is not the primary focus. Prophesying in I Corinthians is basically communicating the gospel (cf. 14:24,39).

D. They are the Spirit’s contemporary means of revealing the contemporary and practical applications of God’s truth to each new situation, culture, or time period (cf. I Cor. 14:3).

E. They were active in the early Pauline churches (cf. I Cor. 11:4-5; 12:28,29; 13:29; 14:1,3,4,5,6,22,24,29,31, 32,37,39; Eph. 2:20; 3:5; 4:11; I Thess. 5:20) and are mentioned in the *Didache* (written in the late first century or in the second century, date uncertain) and in Montanism of the second and third centuries in northern Africa.

### IV. Have the NT gifts ceased?

A. This question is difficult to answer. It helps to clarify the issue by defining the purpose of the gifts. Are they meant to confirm the initial preaching of the gospel or are they ongoing ways for the church to minister to itself and a lost world?

B. Does one look at the history of the church to answer the question or the NT itself? There is no indication that the spiritual gifts were temporary in the NT. Those who try to use I Cor. 13:8-13 to address this issue abuse the authorial intent of the passage, which asserts that everything but love will pass away.

C. I am tempted to say that since the NT, not church history, is the authority believers must affirm that the gifts continue. However, I believe that culture affects interpretation. Some very clear texts are no longer applicable (i.e. the holy kiss, women wearing veils, churches meeting in homes, etc). If culture affects texts then why not church history?

D. This is simply a question that cannot be definitively answered. Some believers will advocate “cessation” and others “non-cessation.” In this area, as in many interpretative issues, the heart of the believer is the key. The NT is ambiguous and cultural. The difficulty is being able to decide which texts are affected by culture/history and which are eternal (cf. Fee and Stuart’s *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth*, pp. 14-19 and 69-77). Here is where the discussions of freedom and responsibility, which are found in Rom. 14:1-15:13 and I Cor. 8-10, are crucial. How we answer the question is important in two ways.

1. Each believer must walk in faith in the light they have. God looks at our heart and motives.

2. Each believer must allow other believers to walk in their faith understanding. There must be tolerance within biblical bounds. God wants us to love one another as He does.

E. To sum up the issue, Christianity is a life of faith and love, not a perfect theology. A relationship with Him which impacts our relationship with others is more important than definitive information or creedal perfection.

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: DEGREES OF REWARDS AND PUNISHMENT

A. Appropriate and inappropriate response to God is based on knowledge. The less knowledge one has the less responsible one is. The opposite is also true.

B. Knowledge of God comes in two basic ways.

1. creation (cf. Ps. 19; Rom. 1-2)

2. Scripture (cf. Ps. 19, 119; the gospel)
- C. OT evidence
1. rewards
    - a. Gen. 15:1 (usually associated with earthly reward, land and sons)
    - b. Deut. 27-28 (covenant obedience brings blessing)
  2. punishment
    - a. Deut. 27-28 (covenant disobedience brings cursing)
  3. The OT pattern of reward for personal, covenantal righteousness is modified because of human sin. This modification is seen in Job and Ps. 73. The NT changes the focus from this world to the next (of the Sermon on the Mount, Matt. 5-7).
- D. NT evidence
1. rewards (beyond salvation)
    - a. Mark 9:41
    - b. Matt. 5:12,46; 6:1-4,5-6,6-18; 10:41-42; 16:27; 25:14-23
    - c. Luke 6:23,35; 19:11-19,25-26
  2. punishment
    - a. Mark 12:38-40
    - b. Luke 10:12; 12:47-48; 19:20-24; 20:47
    - c. Matthew 5:22,29,30; 7:19; 10:15,28; 11:22-24; 13:49-50; 18:6; 25:14-30
    - d. James 3:1
- E. For me the only analogy that makes sense is from the opera. I do not attend opera presentations so I do not understand them. The more I knew of the difficulty and intricateness of the plot, music, and dance the more I would appreciate the performance. I believe heaven will fill our cups, but I think our earthly service determines the size of the cup.
- Therefore, knowledge and a response to that knowledge results in rewards and punishments (cf. Matt. 16:7; I Cor. 3:8,14; 9:17,18; Gal. 6:7; II Tim. 4:14). There is a spiritual principle—we reap what we sow! Some sow more and reap more (cf. Matt. 13:8,23).
- F. “The crown of righteousness” is ours in the finished work of Jesus Christ (cf. II Tim. 4:8), but notice, “the crown of life” is connected to perseverance under trial (cf. James 1:12; Rev. 2:10; 3:10-11). The “crown of glory” for Christian leaders is connected to their lifestyle (cf. I Pet. 5:1-4). Paul knows he has an imperishable crown, but he exercises extreme self-control (cf. I Cor. 9:24-27).
- The mystery of the Christian life is that the gospel is absolutely free in the finished work of Christ, but as we must respond to God’s offer in Christ, we must also respond to God’s empowerment for Christian living. The Christian life is as supernatural as is salvation, yet we must receive it and hold on to it. The free-and-cost-everything paradox is the mystery of rewards and sowing/reaping.
- We are not saved by good works, but for good works (cf. Eph. 2:8-10). Good works are the evidence that we have met Him (cf. Matt. 7). Human merit in the area of salvation leads to destruction, but godly living which results from salvation is rewarded.

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: QUALIFICATIONS FOR FEMALE CHURCH WORKERS

- A. dignified (3:11)
- B. not malicious gossips (3:11)
- C. temperate (3:11)
- D. faithful in all things (3:11)
- E. not supported by relatives (3:11)
- F. hope fixed on God (5:5)
- G. continues in prayer (5:5)
- H. above reproach (5:7)
- I. over sixty years old (5:9)
- J. wife of one man (5:9)
- K. reputation of good works (5:10)
  1. raised children well (5:10)
  2. showed hospitality to strangers (5:10)
  3. washed the saints’ feet (5:10)
  4. assisted those in distress (5:10)
  5. devoted to every good work (5:10)

M. R. Vincent, *Word Studies*, vol. 2, pp. 752 and 1196, says that the *Apostolical Constitutions*, dating from the late second or early third century, makes a distinction between the duties and ordination of female church helpers.



- A. deaconesses
- B. widows (cf. I Tim. 3:11; 5:9-10)
- C. virgins (cf. Acts 21:9 and possibly I Cor. 7:34)

These duties involved:

- A. caring for the sick
- B. caring for those physically persecuted
- C. visiting those in prison for the faith
- D. teaching new believers
- E. assisting in baptism of women
- F. some overseeing of female church members

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## **SPECIAL TOPIC: RACISM**

### **I. Introduction**

- A. This is a universal expression by fallen mankind within his society. This is mankind's ego, supporting itself on the backs of others. Racism is, in many ways, a modern phenomena, while nationalism (or tribalism) is a more ancient expression.
- B. Nationalism began at Babel (Gen. 11) and which was originally related to Noah's three sons from which the so called races developed (Gen. 10). However, it is obvious from Scripture that humanity is from one source (cf. Gen. 1-3; Acts 17:24-26).
- C. Racism is just one of many prejudices. Some others are (1) educational snobbery; (2) socio-economic arrogance; (3) self-righteous religious legalism; and (4) dogmatic political affiliations.

### **II. Biblical Material**

#### **A. Old Testament**

- 1. Gen. 1:27- Mankind, male and female, were made in the image and likeness of God, which makes them unique. It also shows their individual worth and dignity (cf. John 3:16).
- 2. Gen. 1:11-25 - Records the phrase, ". . .according to its own kind. . ." ten times. This has been used to support racial segregation. However, it is obvious from the context that this refers to animals and plants and not to humanity.
- 3. Gen. 9:18-27 - This has been used to support racial dominance. It must be remembered that God did not curse Canaan. Noah, his father, cursed him after awakening from a drunken stupor. The Bible never records that God confirmed this oath/curse. Even if He did, this does not affect the black race. Canaan was the father of those who inhabited Palestine and the Egyptian wall art shows they were not black.
- 4. Joshua 9:23 - This has been used to prove one race will serve another. However, in context, the Gibeonites are of the same racial stock as the Jews.
- 5. Ezra 9-10 and Neh. 13 - These have often been used in a racial sense, but the context shows that the marriages were condemned, not because of race (they were from the same son of Noah, Genesis 10), but for religious reasons.

#### **B. New Testament**

##### **1. The Gospels**

- a. Jesus made use of the hatred between the Jews and Samaritans on several instances, which shows that racial hatred is inappropriate.
  - (1) the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37)
  - (2) the woman at the well (John 4:4)
  - (3) the thankful leper (Luke 17:7-19)
- b. The Gospel is for all humanity
  - (1) John 3:16
  - (2) Luke 24:46-47
  - (3) Hebrews 2:9
  - (4) Revelation 14:6
- c. The Kingdom will include all humanity
  - (1) Luke 13:29
  - (2) Revelation 5

##### **2. Acts**

- a. Acts 10 is a definitive passage on God's universal love and the gospel's universal message.
- b. Peter was attacked for his actions in Acts 11 and this problem was not resolved until the Jerusalem Council of Acts 15 met and came to a solution. The tension between first century Jews and Gentiles was very intense.

##### **3. Paul**

- a. There are no barriers in Christ
  - (1) Gal. 3:26-28

(2) Eph. 2:11-22

(3) Col. 3:11

b. God is no respecter of persons

(1) Rom. 2:11

(2) Eph. 6:9

4. Peter and James

a. God is no respecter of persons, I Pet. 1:17

b. Because God does not show partiality, then neither should His people, James 2:1

5. John

a. One of the strongest statements on the responsibility of believers is found in I John 4:20

### III. Conclusion

A. Racism, or for that matter, prejudice of any kind, is totally inappropriate for God's children. Here is a quote from Henlee Barnette, who spoke at a forum at Glorieta, New Mexico for the Christian Life Commission in 1964.

"Racism is heretical because it is unbiblical and unchristian, not to mention unscientific."

B. This problem gives Christians the opportunity to show their Christlike love, forgiveness and understanding to a lost world. Christian refusal in this area shows immaturity and is an opportunity for the evil one to retard the believer's faith, assurance, and growth. It will also act as a barrier to lost people coming to Christ.

C. What can I do? (This section is taken from a Christian Life Commission tract entitled "Race Relations")

#### "ON THE PERSONAL LEVEL"

- Accept your own responsibility in solving the problems associated with race.
- Through prayer, Bible study, and fellowship with those of other races, strive to rid your life of racial prejudice.
- Express your convictions about race, particularly where those who stir up race hatred are unchallenged.

#### "IN FAMILY LIFE"

- Recognize the importance of family influence in the development of attitudes toward other races.
- Seek to develop Christian attitudes by talking over what children and parents hear about the race issue outside the home.
- Parents should be careful to set a Christian example in relating to people of other races.
- Seek opportunities to make family friendships across racial lines.

#### "IN YOUR CHURCH"

- By the preaching and teaching of biblical truth relating to race, the congregation can be motivated to set an example for the entire community.
- Be sure that worship, fellowship, and service through the church is open to all, even as the NT churches observed no racial barriers (Eph. 2:11-22; Gal. 3:26-29).

#### "IN DAILY LIFE"

◆◆ Help to overcome all racial discrimination in the world of work.

- Work through community organizations of all kinds to secure equal rights and opportunities, remembering that it is the race problem which should be attacked, not people. The aim is to promote understanding, not to create bitterness.
- If it seems wise, organize a special committee of concerned citizens for the purpose of opening lines of communication in the community for education of the general public and for specific actions in improving race relations.
- Support legislation and legislators in the passing of laws promoting racial justice and oppose those who exploit prejudice for political gain.
- Commend law enforcement officials for enforcing the laws without discrimination.
- Shun violence, and promote respect for the law, doing everything possible as a Christian citizen to make sure that legal structures do not become tools in the hands of those who would promote discrimination.
- Exemplify the spirit and mind of Christ in all human relationship.

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: RANSOM/REDEEM

### I. OLD TESTAMENT

A. There are primarily two Hebrew legal terms which convey this concept.

1. *Gaal*, which basically means "to free" by means of a price paid. A form of the term *go'el* adds to the concept, a personal intermediary, usually a family member (i.e. kinsman redeemer). This cultural aspect of the right to buy back objects, animals, land (cf. Lev. 25:27), or relatives (cf. Ruth 4:15; Isa. 29:22) is transferred theologically to YHWH's deliverance of Israel from Egypt (cf. Exod. 6:6; 15:13; Ps. 74:2; 77:15; Jer. 31:11). He becomes "the redeemer" (cf. Job 19:25; Ps. 19:14; 78:35; Prov. 23:1; Isa. 41:14; 43:14; 44:6,24; 47:4; 48:17; 49:7,26; 54:5,8; 59:20; 60:16; 63:16; Jer. 50:34).
2. *Padah*, which basically means "to deliver" or "to rescue"
  - a. the redemption of the first born, Exod. 13:13,14 and Num. 18:15-17

- b. Physical redemption is contrasted with spiritual redemption, Ps. 49:7,8,15
  - c. YHWH will redeem Israel from their sin and rebellion, Ps. 130:7-8
- B. The theological concept involves three related items
  - 1. There is a need, a bondage, a forfeiting, an imprisonment.
    - a. physical
    - b. social
    - c. spiritual (cf. Ps. 130:8)
  - 2. A price must be paid for freedom, release, and restoration.
    - a. of the nation, Israel (cf. Deut. 7:8)
    - b. of the individual (cf. Job 19:25-27; 33:28)
  - 3. Someone must act as intermediary and benefactor. In *gaal* this one is usually a family member or near kin (i.e. *go'el*).
  - 4. YHWH often describes Himself in familial terms.
    - a. Father
    - b. Husband
    - c. Near Kin

Redemption was secured through YHWH's personal agency; a price was paid, and redemption was achieved!

## II. NEW TESTAMENT

- A. There are several terms used to convey the theological concept.
  - 1. *Agorazō* (cf. I Cor. 6:20; 7:23; II Pet. 2:1; Rev. 5:9; 14:34). This is a commercial term which reflects a price paid for something. We are blood-bought people who do not control our own lives. We belong to Christ.
  - 2. *Exagorazō* (cf. Gal. 3:13; 4:5; Eph. 5:16; Col. 4:5). This is also a commercial term. It reflects Jesus' substitutionary death on our behalf. Jesus bore the "curse" of a performance-based law (i.e. Mosaic Law), which sinful humans could not accomplish. He bore the curse (cf. Deut. 21:23) for us all! In Jesus, God's justice and love merge into full forgiveness, acceptance, and access!
  - 3. *Luō*, "to set free"
    - a. *Lutron*, "a price paid" (cf. Matt. 20:28; Mark 10:45). These are powerful words from Jesus' own mouth concerning the purpose of His coming, to be the Savior of the world by paying a sin-debt He did not owe (cf. John 1:29).
    - b. *Lutroō*, "to release"
      - (1) to redeem Israel, Luke 24:21
      - (2) to give Himself to redeem and purify a people, Titus 2:14
      - (3) to be a sinless substitute, I Pet. 1:18-19
    - c. *Lutrōsis*, "redemption, deliverance, or liberation"
      - (1) Zacharias' prophecy about Jesus, Luke 1:68
      - (2) Anna's praise to God for Jesus, Luke 2:38
      - (3) Jesus' better, once offered sacrifice, Heb. 9:12
  - 4. *Apolytrōsis*
    - a. redemption at the Second Coming (cf. Acts 3:19-21)
      - (1) Luke 21:28
      - (2) Romans 8:23
      - (3) Ephesians 1:14; 4:30
      - (4) Hebrews 9:15
    - b. redemption in Christ's death
      - (1) Romans 3:24
      - (2) I Corinthians 1:30
      - (3) Ephesians 1:7
      - (4) Colossians 1:14
  - 5. *Antilytron* (cf. I Tim. 2:6). This is a crucial text (as is Titus 2:14), which links release to Jesus' substitutionary death on the cross. He is the one and only acceptable sacrifice; the one who dies for "all" (cf. John 1:29; 3:16-17; 4:42; I Tim. 2:4; 4:10; Titus 2:11; II Pet. 3:9; I John 2:2; 4:14).
- B. The theological concept in the NT implies
  - 1. Mankind is enslaved to sin (cf. John 8:34; Rom. 3:10-18; 6:23).
  - 2. Mankind's bondage to sin has been revealed by the OT Mosaic Law (cf. Gal. 3) and Jesus' Sermon on the Mount (cf. Matt. 5-7). Human performance has become a death sentence (cf. Col. 2:14).
  - 3. Jesus, the sinless lamb of God, has come and died in our place (cf. John 1:29; II Cor. 5:21). We have been purchased from sin so that we might serve God (cf. Rom. 6).
  - 4. By implication both YHWH and Jesus are "near kin" who act on our behalf. This continues the familial metaphors (i.e. father, husband, son, brother, near kin).
  - 5. Redemption was not a price paid to Satan (i.e. Medieval theology), but the reconciliation of God's word and God's justice with God's love and full provision in Christ. At the cross peace was restored, human rebellion was forgiven, the image of God in mankind is now fully functional again in intimate fellowship!
  - 6. There is still a future aspect of redemption (cf. Rom. 8:23; Eph. 1:14; 4:30), which involves our resurrection bodies and physical intimacy with the Triune God.

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: REIGNING IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD

The concept of reigning with Christ is part of the larger theological category called “the Kingdom of God.” This is a carry-over from the OT concept of God as the true king of Israel (cf. I Sam. 8:7). He symbolically reigned (I Sam. 8:7; 10:17-19) through a descendant from the tribe of Judah (cf. Gen. 49:10) and the family of Jesse (cf. II Sam. 7).

Jesus is the promised fulfillment of OT prophecy concerning the Messiah. He inaugurated the Kingdom of God with His incarnation at Bethlehem. The Kingdom of God became the central pillar of Jesus’ preaching. The Kingdom had fully come in Him (cf. Matt. 10:7; 11:12; 12:28; Mark 1:15; Luke 10:9,11; 11:20; 16:16; 17:20-21).

However, the Kingdom was also future (eschatological). It was present but not consummated (cf. Matt. 6:10; 8:11; 16:28; 22:1-14; 26:29; Luke 9:27; 11:2; 13:29; 14:10-24; 22:16,18). Jesus came the first time as a suffering servant (cf. Isa. 52:13-53:12); as humble (cf. Zech. 9:9) but He will return as King of Kings (cf. Matt. 2:2; 21:5; 27:11-14). The concept of “reigning” is surely a part of this “kingdom” theology. God has given the kingdom to Jesus’ followers (see Luke 12:32).

The concept of reigning with Christ has several aspects and questions:

1. Do the passages which assert that God has given believers “the kingdom” through Christ refer to “reigning” (cf. Matt. 5:3,10; Luke 12:32)?
2. Do Jesus’ words to the original disciples in the first century Jewish context refer to all believers (cf. Matt. 19:28; Luke 22:28-30)?
3. Does Paul’s emphasis on reigning in this life now contrast or complement the above texts (cf. Rom. 5:17; I Cor. 4:8)?
4. How are suffering and reigning related (cf. Rom. 8:17; II Tim. 2:11-12; I Pet. 4:13; Rev. 1:9)?
5. The recurrent theme of Revelation is sharing the glorified Christ’s reign
  - a. earthly, 5:10
  - b. millennial, 20:5,6
  - c. eternal, 2:26; 3:21; 22:5 and Dan. 7:14,18,27

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: RENEWED (*ANAKAINŌSIS*)

This Greek term in its various forms (*anakainōō*, *anakainizō*) has two basic meanings.

1. “to cause something to become new and different (i.e. better)” - Rom. 12:2; Col. 3:10
2. “to cause a change to a previous preferable state” - II Cor. 4:16; Heb. 6:4-6

(taken from Louw and Nida’s *Greek-English Lexicon*, vol. 1, pp. 157, 594)

Moulton and Milligan, *The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament*, say that this term (i.e. *anakkainōsis*) cannot be found in Greek literature earlier than Paul. Paul may have coined this term himself (p. 34).

Frank Stagg, *New Testament Theology*, has an interesting comment.

“Regeneration and renewal belong to God alone. *Anakkainōsis*, the word for “renewal,” is an action noun, and it is employed in the New Testament, along with verb forms, to describe a continuing renewal, as in Romans 12:2, ‘Be ye transformed according to the renewing of your mind’ and 2 Corinthians 4:16, ‘Our inward man is being renewed day by day.’ Colossians 3:10 describes the ‘new man’ as ‘the one being renewed unto thorough knowledge according to the image of the one having created him.’ Thus the ‘new man,’ the newness of life, the ‘regeneration,’ or ‘renewal,’ however designated, is traced to an initial act and a continuing act of God as the giver and sustainer of eternal life” (p. 118).

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: REPENTANCE

Repentance (along with faith) is a covenant requirement of both the Old Covenant (*Nacham*, I Kgs. 8:47; *Shuv*, I Kgs. 8:48; Ezek. 14:6; 18:30; Joel 2:12-13; Zech. 1:3-4) and the New Covenant.

1. John the Baptist (Matt. 3:2; Mark 1:4; Luke 3:3,8)
2. Jesus (Matt. 4:17; Mark 1:15; 2:17; Luke 5:32; 13:3,5; 15:7; 17:3)
3. Peter (Acts 2:38; 3:19; 8:22; 11:18; II Pet. 3:9)
4. Paul (Acts 13:24; 17:30; 20:21; 26:20; Rom. 2:4; II Cor. 2:9-10)

But what is repentance? Is it sorrow? Is it a cessation of sin? The best chapter in the NT for understanding the different connotations of this concept is II Corinthians 7:8-11, where three related, but different, Greek terms are used.

1. “sorrow” (*lupē*, cf. vv. 8 [twice], 9 [thrice], 10 [twice], 11). It means grief or distress and has a theologically neutral connotation.
2. “repentance” (*metanoeō*, cf. vv. 9,10). It is a compound of “after” and “mind,” which implies a new mind, a new way of thinking, a new attitude toward life and God. This is true repentance.
3. “regret” (*metamelomai*, cf. vv. 8 [twice], 10). It is a compound of “after” and “care.” It is used of Judas in Matt. 27:3 and Esau in Heb. 12:16-17. It implies sorrow over the consequences, not over the acts.

Repentance and faith are the required covenant acts (cf. Mark 1:15; Acts 2:38,41; 3:16,19; 20:21). There are some texts which imply that God gives repentance (cf. Acts 5:31; 11:18; II Tim. 2:25). But most of the texts see this as a necessary human covenantal response to God’s offer of a free

salvation (restored to family fellowship, cf. Luke 15:20-24).

The definitions of both the Hebrew and Greek terms are required to grasp the full meaning of repentance. The Hebrew demands “a change of action,” while the Greek demands “a change of mind.” The saved person receives a new mind and heart. He thinks differently and lives differently. Instead of “What’s in it for me?” the question is now “What is God’s will?” Repentance is not an emotion that fades nor a total sinlessness, but a new relationship with the Holy One who transforms the believer progressively into a holy one.

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## **SPECIAL TOPIC: THE RESURRECTION**

- A. Evidence for the resurrection
  - 1. Fifty (50) days later at Pentecost, the resurrection had become the key note of Peter’s sermon (cf. Acts 2). Thousands who lived in the area where it happened believed!
  - 2. The lives of the disciples were changed radically from discouragement (they were not expecting resurrection) to boldness, even martyrdom.
- B. Significance of the resurrection
  - 1. Shows Jesus was who He claimed to be (cf. Matt. 12:38-40 prediction of death and resurrection).
  - 2. God put His approval on Jesus’ life, teaching, and substitutionary death! (cf. Rom. 4:25).
  - 3. Shows us the promise to all Christians (i.e., resurrection bodies, cf. I Cor. 15).
- C. Claims from Jesus that He would rise from the dead:
  - 1. Matt. 12:38-40; 16:21; 17:9,22, 23; 20:18-19; 26:32; 27:63
  - 2. Mark 8:31-9:1-10, 31; 14:28,58
  - 3. Luke 9:22-27
  - 4. John 2:19-22; 12:34; chapters 14-16
- D. Further Study
  - 1. *Evidence That Demands a Verdict* by Josh McDowell
  - 2. *Who Moved the Stone?* by Frank Morrison
  - 3. *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*, “Resurrection,” “Resurrection of Jesus Christ”
  - 4. *Systematic Theology* by L. Berkhof, pp. 346, 720.

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## **SPECIAL TOPIC: DEGREES OF REWARDS AND PUNISHMENT**

- A. Appropriate and inappropriate response to God is based on knowledge. The less knowledge one has the less responsible one is. The opposite is also true.
- B. Knowledge of God comes in two basic ways.
  - 1. creation (cf. Ps. 19; Rom. 1-2)
  - 2. Scripture (cf. Ps. 19, 119; the gospel)
- C. OT evidence
  - 1. rewards
    - a. Gen. 15:1 (usually associated with earthly reward, land and sons)
    - b. Deut. 27-28 (covenant obedience brings blessing)
  - 2. punishment
    - a. Deut. 27-28 (covenant disobedience brings cursing)
  - 3. The OT pattern of reward for personal, covenantal righteousness is modified because of human sin. This modification is seen in Job and Ps. 73. The NT changes the focus from this world to the next (of the Sermon on the Mount, Matt. 5-7).
- D. NT evidence
  - 1. rewards (beyond salvation)
    - a. Mark 9:41
    - b. Matt. 5:12,46; 6:1-4,5-6,6-18; 10:41-42; 16:27; 25:14-23
    - c. Luke 6:23,35; 19:11-19,25-26
  - 2. punishment
    - a. Mark 12:38-40
    - b. Luke 10:12; 12:47-48; 19:20-24; 20:47
    - c. Matthew 5:22,29,30; 7:19; 10:15,28; 11:22-24; 13:49-50; 18:6; 25:14-30
    - d. James 3:1
- E. For me the only analogy that makes sense is from the opera. I do not attend opera presentations so I do not understand them. The more I knew of the difficulty and intricateness of the plot, music, and dance the more I would appreciate the performance. I believe heaven will fill our cups, but I think our earthly service determines the size of the cup.  
Therefore, knowledge and a response to that knowledge results in rewards and punishments (cf. Matt. 16:7; I Cor. 3:8,14; 9:17,18; Gal. 6:7; II

Tim. 4:14). There is a spiritual principle—we reap what we sow! Some sow more and reap more (cf. Matt. 13:8,23).

- F. “The crown of righteousness” is ours in the finished work of Jesus Christ (cf. II Tim. 4:8), but notice, “the crown of life” is connected to perseverance under trial (cf. James 1:12; Rev. 2:10; 3:10-11). The “crown of glory” for Christian leaders is connected to their lifestyle (cf. I Pet. 5:1-4). Paul knows he has an imperishable crown, but he exercises extreme self-control (cf. I Cor. 9:24-27).

The mystery of the Christian life is that the gospel is absolutely free in the finished work of Christ, but as we must respond to God’s offer in Christ, we must also respond to God’s empowerment for Christian living. The Christian life is as supernatural as is salvation, yet we must receive it and hold on to it. The free-and-cost-everything paradox is the mystery of rewards and sowing/reaping.

We are not saved by good works, but for good works (cf. Eph. 2:8-10). Good works are the evidence that we have met Him (cf. Matt. 7). Human merit in the area of salvation leads to destruction, but godly living which results from salvation is rewarded.

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: RIGHTEOUSNESS

“Righteousness” is such a crucial topic that a Bible student must make a personal extensive study of the concept.

In the OT God’s character is described as “just” or “righteous.” The Mesopotamian term itself comes from a river reed which was used as a construction tool to judge the horizontal straightness of walls and fences. God chose the term to be used metaphorically of His own nature. He is the straight edge (ruler) by which all things are evaluated. This concept asserts God’s righteousness as well as His right to judge.

Man was created in the image of God (cf. Gen. 1:26-27; 5:1,3; 9:6). Mankind was created for fellowship with God. All of creation is a stage or backdrop for God and mankind’s interaction. God wanted His highest creation, mankind, to know Him, love Him, serve Him, and be like Him! Mankind’s loyalty was tested (cf. Gen. 3) and the original couple failed the test. This resulted in a disruption of the relationship between God and humanity (cf. Gen. 3; Rom. 5:12-21).

God promised to repair and restore the fellowship (cf. Gen. 3:15). He does this through His own will and His own Son. Humans were incapable of restoring the breach (cf. Rom. 1:18-3:20).

After the Fall, God’s first step toward restoration was the concept of covenant based on His invitation and mankind’s repentant, faithful, obedient response. Because of the Fall, humans were incapable of appropriate action (cf. Rom. 3:21-31; Gal. 3). God Himself had to take the initiative to restore covenant-breaking humans. He did this by

1. declaring sinful mankind righteous through the work of Christ (forensic righteousness).
2. freely giving mankind righteousness through the work of Christ (imputed righteousness).
3. providing the indwelling Spirit who produces righteousness (ethical righteousness) in mankind.
4. restoring the fellowship of the garden of Eden by Christ restoring the image of God (cf. Gen. 1:26-27) in believers (relational righteousness).

However, God requires a covenantal response. God decrees (i.e. freely gives) and provides, but humans must respond and continue to respond in

1. repentance
2. faith
3. lifestyle obedience
4. perseverance

Righteousness, therefore, is a covenantal, reciprocal action between God and His highest creation. It is based on the character of God, the work of Christ, and the enabling of the Spirit, to which each individual must personally and continually respond appropriately. The concept is called “justification by faith.” The concept is revealed in the Gospels, but not in these terms. It is primarily defined by Paul, who uses the Greek term **δικαιοσύνη** “righteousness” in its various forms over 100 times.

Paul, being a trained rabbi, uses the term *dikaio sunē* in its Hebrew sense of the term *SDQ* used in the Septuagint, not from Greek literature. In Greek writings the term is connected to someone who conformed to the expectations of deity and society. In the Hebrew sense it is always structured in covenantal terms. YHWH is a just, ethical, moral God. He wants His people to reflect His character. Redeemed mankind becomes a new creature. This newness results in a new lifestyle of godliness (Roman Catholic focus of justification). Since Israel was a theocracy, there was no clear delineation between the secular (society’s norms) and the sacred (God’s will). This distinction is expressed in the Hebrew and Greek terms being translated into English as “justice” (relating to society) and “righteousness” (relating to religion).

The gospel (good news) of Jesus is that fallen mankind has been restored to fellowship with God. Paul’s paradox is that God, through Christ, acquits the guilty. This has been accomplished through the Father’s love, mercy, and grace; the Son’s life, death, and resurrection; and the Spirit’s wooing and drawing to the gospel. Justification is a free act of God, but it must issue in godliness (Augustine’s position, which reflects both the Reformation emphasis on the freeness of the gospel and Roman Catholic emphasis on a changed life of love and faithfulness). For Reformers the term “the righteousness of God” is an OBJECTIVE GENITIVE (i.e. the act of making sinful mankind acceptable to God [positional sanctification]), while for the Catholic it is a SUBJECTIVE GENITIVE, which is the process of becoming more like God (experiential progressive sanctification). In reality it is surely both!!

In my view all of the Bible, from Gen. 4 - Rev. 20, is a record of God’s restoring the fellowship of Eden. The Bible starts with God and mankind in fellowship in an earthly setting (cf. Gen. 1-2) and the Bible ends with the same setting (cf. Rev. 21-22). God’s image and purpose will be restored!

To document the above discussions note the following selected NT passages illustrating the Greek word group.

1. God is righteous (often connected to God as Judge)
  - a. Romans 3:26
  - b. II Thessalonians 1:5-6
  - c. II Timothy 4:8
  - d. Revelation 16:5
2. Jesus is righteous



- a. Acts 3:14; 7:52; 22:14 (title of Messiah)
- b. Matthew 27:19
- c. I John 2:1,29; 3:7
- 3. God's will for His creation is righteousness
  - a. Leviticus 19:2
  - b. Matthew 5:48 (cf. 5:17-20)
- 4. God's means of providing and producing righteousness
  - a. Romans 3:21-31
  - b. Romans 4
  - c. Romans 5:6-11
  - d. Galatians 3:6-14
  - e. Given by God
    - 1) Romans 3:24; 6:23
    - 2) I Corinthians 1:30
    - 3) Ephesians 2:8-9
  - f. Received by faith
    - 1) Romans 1:17; 3:22,26; 4:3,5,13; 9:30; 10:4,6,10
    - 2) I Corinthians 5:21
  - g. Through acts of the Son
    - 1) Romans 5:21-31
    - 2) II Corinthians 5:21
    - 3) Philippians 2:6-11
- 5. God's will is that His followers be righteous
  - a. Matthew 5:3-48; 7:24-27
  - b. Romans 2:13; 5:1-5; 6:1-23
  - c. II Corinthians 6:14
  - d. I Timothy 6:11
  - e. II Timothy 2:22; 3:16
  - f. I John 3:7
  - g. I Peter 2:24
- 6. God will judge the world by righteousness
  - a. Acts 17:31
  - b. II Timothy 4:8

Righteousness is a characteristic of God, freely given to sinful mankind through Christ. It is

- 1. a decree of God
- 2. a gift of God
- 3. an act of Christ

But it is also a process of becoming righteous that must be vigorously and steadfastly pursued; it will one day be consummated at the Second Coming. Fellowship with God is restored at salvation, but progresses throughout life to become a face-to-face encounter at death or the Parousia!

Here is a good quote taken from *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters* from IVP

"Calvin, more so than Luther, emphasizes the relational aspect of the righteousness of God. Luther's view of the righteousness of God seems to contain the aspect of acquittal. Calvin emphasizes the marvelous nature of the communication or imparting of God's righteousness to us" (p. 834).

For me the believer's relationship to God has three aspects:

- 1. the gospel is a person (the Eastern Church and Calvin's emphasis)
- 2. the gospel is truth (Augustine's and Luther's emphases)
- 3. the gospel is a changed life (Catholic emphasis)

They are all true and must be held together for a healthy, sound, biblical Christianity. If any one is over emphasized or depreciated, problems occur.

We must welcome Jesus!

We must believe the gospel!

We must pursue Christlikeness!

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: SADDUCEES

### I. Origin of the Group

- A. Most scholars believe the name comes from Zadok, one of David's high priests (cf. II Sam. 8:17; 15:24). Later, Solomon exiled Abiathar for supporting the rebellion of Adonijah (cf. I Kgs. 2:26-27) and recognized Zadok as the only High Priest (cf. I Kgs. 2:35). After the Babylonian exile this priestly line was reestablished in Joshua or Jeshua (cf. Hag. 1:1). This Levitical family was chosen to administer the temple. Later those who were of this priestly tradition and their supporters were called Sadducees.



- B. A ninth century A.D. rabbinical tradition (*Aboth* of Rabbi Nathan) says Zadok was a disciple of Antigonus of Sokho (second century B.C.). Zadok misunderstood a famous saying of his mentor involving “after dead rewards” and developed a theology that denied an afterlife and thereby also denied the resurrection of the body.
- C. Later within Judaism the Sadducees are identified with the Boethusians. Boethus was also a disciple of Antigonus of Sokho. He developed a theology similar to Zadok, which also denied an afterlife.
- D. The name Sadducee does not appear until the days of John Hyrcanus (135-104 B.C.), cited by Josephus (cf. *Antiquities* 13:10:5-6). In *Antiquities* 13:5:9 Josephus says there existed “three schools of thought”: Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes.
- E. There is a rival theory that they came from the time of the Seleucid rulers’ attempts to Hellenize the priesthood under Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175-163 B.C.). During the Maccabean revolt, a new priesthood was started in Simon Maccabees (142- 135 B.C.) and his descendants (cf. I Macc. 14:41). These new Hasmonean high priests were the possible start of the aristocratic Sadducees. The Pharisees developed during this same time from the Hasidim (i.e. “the separated ones,” cf. I Macc. 2:42; 7:5-23).
- F. There is the modern theory (i.e. T. W. Manson), that Sadducee is a transliteration of the Greek term *sundikoi*. This term referred to local authorities who interfaced with Roman authority. This may explain why some Sadducees were not aristocratic priests, but were members of the Sanhedrin.

## II. Distinctive Beliefs

- A. They were the conservative priestly faction of the sects of Jewish life during the Hasmonean and Roman periods.
- B. They were especially concerned with temple procedures, protocol, rituals, and liturgy.
- C. They held to the written Torah (i.e. Gen. - Deut.) as authoritative, but rejected the Oral Tradition (i.e. Talmud).
- D. They, therefore, rejected many of the cherished developed doctrines of the Pharisees
  - 1. the resurrection of the body (cf. Matt. 22:23; Mark. 12:18; Luke 20:27; Acts 4:1-2; 23:8)
  - 2. the immortality of the soul (cf. *Antiquities* 18:1:3-4; *Wars* 2:8:14)
  - 3. the existence of an elaborate hierarchy of angels (cf. Acts 23:8)
  - 4. they took the “eye-for-an-eye” (*lex talionis*) literally and supported physical punishment and the death penalty (instead of a monetary settlement)
- E. Another area of theological dispute was predestination vs. free will. Of the three groups mentioned by Josephus
  - 1. the Essenes affirmed a kind of determinism
  - 2. the Sadducees placed an emphasis on human free will (cf. *Antiquities* 13:5:9; *Wars* 2:8:14)
  - 3. the Pharisees held somewhat of a balancing position between the other two
- F. In one sense the conflicts between the two groups (i.e. Sadducees - Pharisees) mirrored the tension between priests and prophets in the OT. Another tension arose from the fact that the Sadducees represented the social and landed gentry. They were the aristocrats (cf. Josephus’ *Antiquities* 13:10:6; 18:1:4-5; 20:9:1), while the Pharisees and scribes were the scholars and pious among the people of the land. This tension could be characterized as the temple in Jerusalem vs. the local synagogues throughout the land. Another tension may have represented the Sadducean rejection of the influence of Zoroastrianism on Pharisaic theology. Example: a highly developed angelology, a dualism between YHWH and Satan and an elaborate view of the afterlife in glowing physical terms. These excesses by the Essenes and Pharisees caused a reaction in the Sadducees. They return to the conservative position of Moses only theology in an attempt to thwart the speculations of other Jewish groups.

## III. Sources of Information

- A. Josephus is the chief source of information about the Sadducees. He was biased both by his commitment to the Pharisees and his interests in portraying a positive image of Jewish life to the Romans.
- B. The other source of information is the rabbinical literature. However, here, too, a strong bias is evident. The Sadducees denied the relevance and authority of the Oral Tradition of the Elders (i.e. the Talmud). These Pharisaic writings obviously describe their opponents in negative, possibly exaggerated (straw man tactics) ways.
- C. No known writings of Sadducees themselves have survived. With the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in A.D. 70 all documents and influence of the priestly elite were destroyed. They wanted to maintain regional peace and the only way to do that in the first century was to cooperate with Rome (cf. John 11:48-50).

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: SAINTS

This is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew *kadash*, which has the basic meaning of setting some one, some thing, or some place apart for YHWH’s exclusive use. It denotes the English concept of “the sacred.” YHWH is set apart from humanity by His nature (eternal non-created Spirit) and His character (moral perfection). He is the standard by which all else is measured and judged. He is the transcendent, Holy One, Holy Other.

God created humans for fellowship, but the fall (Gen. 3) caused a relational and moral barrier between a Holy God and sinful humanity, god chose to restore His conscious creation; therefore, He calls on His people to be “holy” (cf. Lev. 11:44; 19:2; 20:7,26; 21:8). By a faith relationship with YHWH His people become holy by their covenantal position in Him, but are also called on to live holy (cf. Matt. 5:48).

This holy living is possible because believers are fully accepted and forgiven through Jesus’ life and work and the presence of the Holy Spirit in their minds and hearts. This establishes the paradoxical situation of

- A. being holy because of Christ’s imputed righteousness
- B. called to live holy because of the presence of the Spirit

Believers are “saints” (*hagioi*) because of the presence in our lives of (1) the will of the Holy One (the Father); (2) the work of the Holy Son (Jesus); and (3) the presence of the Holy Spirit.

The NT always refers to saints as PLURAL (except one time in Phil. 4:12, but even then the context makes it PLURAL). To be saved is to be

part of a family, a body, a building! Biblical faith starts with a personal reception, but issues into a corporate fellowship. We are each gifted (cf. I Cor. 12:11) for the health, growth, and well-being of the body of Christ—the church (cf. I Cor. 12:7). We are saved to serve! Holiness is a family characteristic!

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**SPECIAL TOPIC: GREEK VERB TENSES USED FOR SALVATION**

Salvation is not a product, but a relationship. It is not finished when one trusts Christ; it has only begun! It is not a fire insurance policy, nor a ticket to heaven but a personal relationship with Jesus that issues in daily Christlikeness.

**SALVATION AS A COMPLETED ACTION (AORIST)**

- Acts 15:11
- Romans 8:24
- II Timothy 1:9
- Titus 3:5
- Romans 13:11 (combines the AORIST with a FUTURE orientation)

**SALVATION AS A STATE OF BEING (PERFECT TENSE)**

- Ephesians 2:5,8

**SALVATION AS A CONTINUING PROCESS (PRESENT TENSE)**

- I Corinthians 1:18; 15:2
- II Corinthians 2:15
- I Peter 3:21; 4:18

**SALVATION AS A FUTURE CONSUMMATION (FUTURE in VERB TENSE or context)**

- (implied in Matt. 10:22, 24:13; Mark 13:13)
- Romans 5:9,10; 10:9,13
- I Corinthians 3:15; 5:5
- Philippians 1:28;
- I Thessalonians 5:8-9
- I Timothy 4:16
- Hebrews 1:14; 9:28
- I Peter 1:5,9

Therefore, salvation begins with an initial faith decision (cf. John 1:12; 3:16; Rom. 10:9-13), but this must issue in a process of lifestyle faith (cf. Ro. 8:29; Gal. 4:19; Eph. 1:4; 2:10) which will one day be consummated in sight (cf, I John 3:2). This final state is called glorification. This can be illustrated as

1. initial salvation—justification (saved from the penalty of sin)
2. progressive salvation—sanctification (saved from the power of sin)
3. final salvation—glorification (saved from the presence of sin).

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**SPECIAL TOPIC: SANCTIFICATION**

The NT asserts that when sinners turn to Jesus in repentance and faith, they are instantaneously justified and sanctified. This is their new position in Christ. His righteousness has been imputed to them (cf. Rom. 4). They are declared right and holy (a forensic act of God).

But the NT also urges believers on to holiness or sanctification. It is both a theological position in the finished work of Jesus Christ and a call to be Christlike in attitude and actions in daily life. As salvation is a free gift and a cost-everything lifestyle, so too, is sanctification.

<u>Initial Response</u>	<u>A Progressive Christlikeness</u>
Acts 20:23; 26:18	Romans 6:19
Romans 15:16	II Corinthians 7:1
I Corinthians 1:2-3; 6:11	I Thessalonians 3:13; 4:3-4,7; 5:23
II Thessalonians 2:13	I Timothy 2:15
Hebrews 2:11; 10:10,14; 13:12	II Timothy 2:21
I Peter 1:1	Hebrews 12:14
	I Peter 1:15-16

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: THE SANHEDRIN

### I. Sources of Information

- A. The New Testament itself
- B. Flavius Josephus' *Antiquities of the Jews*
- C. The Mishnah section of the Talmud (i.e. Tractate "Sanhedrin")

Unfortunately the NT and Josephus do not agree with the rabbinical writings, which seem to assert two Sanhedrins in Jerusalem, one priestly (i.e. Sadducean), controlled by the High Priest and dealing with civil and criminal justice and a second controlled by the Pharisees and scribes, concerned with religious and traditional issues. However, the rabbinical writings date from A.D. 200 and reflect the cultural situation after the fall of Jerusalem to the Roman general, Titus, in A.D. 70. The Jews reestablished their religious life at a city called Jamnia and later (A.D. 118) moved to Galilee.

### II. Terminology

The problem with identifying this judicial body involves the different names by which it is known. There are several words used to describe judicial bodies within the Jewish community of Jerusalem.

- A. *Gerousia* - "senate" or "council." This is the oldest term which was used toward the end of the Persian period (cf. Josephus' *Antiquities* 12.3.3 and *II Maccabees* 11:27). It is used by Luke in Acts 5:21 along with "Sanhedrin." It may have been a way of explaining the term to Greek-speaking readers (cf. *I Macc.* 12:35).
- B. *Synedrion* - "Sanhedrin." This is a compound from *syn* (together with) and *hedra* (seat). Surprisingly this term is used in Aramaic, but it reflects a Greek word. By the end of the Maccabean period this had become the accepted term to designate the supreme court of the Jews in Jerusalem (cf. Matt. 26:59; Mark 15:1; Luke 22:66; John 11:47; Acts 5:27). The problem comes when the same terminology is used of local judicial councils (local synagogue courts) outside Jerusalem (cf. Matt. 5:22; 10:17).
- C. *Presbyterion* - "council of elders" (cf. Luke 22:66). This is an OT designation for tribal leaders. However, it came to refer to the supreme court in Jerusalem (cf. Acts 22:5).
- D. *Boulē* - This term "council" is used by Josephus (*Wars* 2.16.2; 5.4.2), but not the NT to describe several judicial bodies: (1) the Senate in Rome; (2) local Roman courts; (3) the Jewish supreme court in Jerusalem; and (4) local Jewish courts. Joseph of Arimathea is described as a member of the Sanhedrin by a form of this term (i.e. *bouleutēs*, which means "councilor," cf. Mark 15:43; Luke 23:50).

### III. Historical Development

Originally Ezra is said to have set up the Great Synagogue (cf. Targum on Song of Songs 6:1) in the post-exilic period, which seems to have become the Sanhedrin of Jesus' day.

- A. The Mishnah (i.e. Talmud) records that there were two major courts in Jerusalem (cf. Sanh. 7:1).
  - 1. One made up of 70 (or 71) members (*Sand.* 1:6 even states that Moses set up the first Sanhedrin in Num. 11, cf. Num. 11:16-25).
  - 2. One made up of 23 members (but this may refer to local synagogue courts).
  - 3. Some Jewish scholars believe there were three 23-member Sanhedrins in Jerusalem. When the three got together they, along with the two leaders, constituted "the Great Sanhedrin" of 71 members (*Nasi* and *Av Bet Din*).
    - a. one priestly (i.e. Sadducees)
    - b. one legal (i.e. Pharisees)
    - c. one aristocratic (i.e. elders)
- B. In the post-exilic period, the returning Davidic seed was Zerubbabel and the returning Aaronic seed was Joshua (*Jeshua*). After Zerubbabel's death, no Davidic seed continued, so the judicial mantle passed exclusively to the priests (cf. *I Macc.* 12:6) and local elders (cf. Neh. 2:16; 5:7).
- C. This priestly role in judicial decisions is documented by Diodorus 40:3:4-5 during the Hellenistic period.
- D. This priestly role in government continued during the Selucid period. Josephus quotes Antiochus "the Great" III (223-187 B.C.) in *Antiquities* 12:138-142.
- E. This priestly power continued during the Maccabean period according to Josephus' *Antiquities* 13:10:5-6; 13:15:5.
- F. During the Roman period the governor of Syria (i.e. Gabinius, from 57-55 B.C.) established five regional "Sanhedrins" (cf. Josephus' *Antiquities* 14:5:4; and *Wars* 1:8:5), but this was later annulled by Rome (i.e. 47 B.C.).
- G. The Sanhedrin had a political confrontation with Herod (*Antiquities* 14.9.3-5) who, in 37 B.C., retaliated and had most of the high court killed (cf. Josephus' *Antiquities* 14.9.4; 15.1.2).
- H. Under the Roman procurators (A.D. 6-66) Josephus tells us (cf. *Antiquities* 20.200,251) that the Sanhedrin again gained considerable power and influence (cf. Mark 14:55). There are three trials recorded in the NT where the Sanhedrin, under the leadership of the High Priest's family executes justice.
  - 1. Jesus' trial (cf. Mark 14:53-15:1; John 18:12-23,28-32)
  - 2. Peter and John (cf. Acts 4:3-6)
  - 3. Paul (cf. Acts 22:25-30)
- I. When the Jews revolted in A.D. 66, the Romans subsequently destroyed Jewish society and Jerusalem in A.D. 70. The Sanhedrin was permanently dissolved, although the Pharisees at Jamnia tried to bring a supreme judicial court (*Beth Din*) back into Jewish religious (but not civil or political) life.

### IV. Membership

- A. The first biblical mention of a high court in Jerusalem is II Chr. 19:8-11. It was made up of (1) Levites; (2) priests; and (3) the heads of families (i.e. elders, cf. *I Macc.* 14:20; *II Macc.* 4:44).
- B. During the Maccabean period it was dominated by (1) Sadducean priestly families and (2) local aristocracy (cf. *I Macc.* 7:33; 11:23; 14:28). Later in this period "scribes" (Mosaic lawyers, usually Pharisees) were added, apparently by Alexander Jannaeus' wife Salome (76-67 B.C.). She is even said to have made the Pharisees the predominant group (cf. Josephus' *Wars of the Jews* 1:5:2).
- C. By Jesus' day the court was made up of
  - 1. the families of the High Priests

2. local men of wealthy families
3. scribes (cf. 11:27; Luke 19:47)

#### V. Sources Consulted

- A. *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*, IVP, pp. 728-732
- B. *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*, vol. 5, pp. 268-273
- C. *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, vol. 10, pp. 203-204
- D. *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, vol. 4, pp. 214-218
- E. *Encyclopedia Judaica*, vol. 14, pp. 836-839

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: SATAN

This is a very difficult subject for several reasons.

1. The OT reveals not an arch enemy of good, but a servant of YHWH who offers mankind an alternative and also accuses mankind of unrighteousness. There is only one God (monotheism), one power, one cause in the OT—YHWH.
2. The concept of a personal arch-enemy of God developed in the interbiblical (non-canonical) literature under the influence of Persian dualistic religions (*Zoroastrianism*). This, in turn, greatly influenced rabbinical Judaism and the Essene community (i.e. Dead Sea Scrolls).
3. The NT develops the OT themes in surprisingly stark, but selective, categories.

If one approaches the study of evil from the perspective of biblical theology (each book or author or genre studied and outlined separately), then very different views of evil are revealed.

If, however, one approaches the study of evil from a non-biblical or extra-biblical approach of world religions or eastern religions, then much of the NT development is foreshadowed in Persian dualism and Greco-Roman spiritism.

If one is presuppositionally committed to the divine authority of Scripture, then the NT development must be seen as progressive revelation. Christians must guard against allowing Jewish folk lore or western literature (Dante, Milton) to further influence the concept. There is certainly mystery and ambiguity in this area of revelation. God has chosen not to reveal all aspects of evil, its origin, its development, its purpose, but He has revealed its defeat!

In the OT the term “satan” or “accuser” can relate to three separate groups.

- A. human accusers, I Sam. 29:4; II Sam. 19:22; I Kgs. 11:14,20,29; Ps. 109:6
- B. angelic accusers, Num. 22:22-23; Job 1-2; Zech. 3:1
- C. demonic accusers, I Chr. 21:1; I Kgs. 22:21; Zech. 13:2

Only later in the intertestamental period is the serpent of Genesis 3 identified with Satan (cf. *Book of Wisdom* 2:23-24; *II Enoch* 31:3), and even later does this become a rabbinical option (cf. *Sot* 9b and *Sanh.* 29a). The “sons of God” of Gen. 6 become angels in *I Enoch* 54:6. I mention this, not to assert its theological accuracy, but to show its development. In the NT these OT activities are attributed to angelic, personified evil (cf. I Cor. 11:3; Rev. 12:9).

The origin of personified evil is difficult or impossible (depending on your point of view) to determine from the OT. One reason for this is Israel's strong monotheism (cf. I Kgs. 22:20-22; Eccl. 7:14; Isa. 45:7; Amos 3:6). All causality was attributed to YHWH to demonstrate His uniqueness and primacy (cf. Isa. 43:11; 44:6,8,24; 45:5-6,14,18,21,22).

Sources of possible information are (1) Job 1-2, where Satan is one of the “sons of God” (i.e. angels) or (2) Isa. 14; Ezek. 28, where prideful near-eastern kings (Babylon and Tyre) are possibly used to illustrate the pride of Satan (cf. I Tim. 3:6). I have mixed emotions about this approach. Ezekiel uses Garden of Eden metaphors, not only for the king of Tyre as Satan (cf. Ezek. 28:12-16), but also for the king of Egypt as the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil (Ezek. 31). However, Isa. 14, particularly vv. 12-14, seems to describe an angelic revolt through pride. If God wanted to reveal to us the specific nature and origin of Satan, this is a very oblique way and place to do it. We must guard against the trend of systematic theology of taking small, ambiguous parts of different testaments, authors, books, and genres and combining them as pieces

of one divine puzzle.

I agree with Alfred Edersheim (*The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, vol. 2, appendices XIII [pp. 748-763] and XVI [pp.770-776]) that rabbinical Judaism has been overly influenced by Persian dualism and demonic speculation. The rabbis are not a good source for truth in this area. Jesus radically diverges from the teachings of the Synagogue in this area. I think that the concept of an arch-angelic enemy of YHWH, as well as mankind. The two high gods of Judaic dualism, *Ahkiman* and *Ormaza*, good and evil, were developed into a biblical dualism of YHWH and Satan.

There is surely progressive revelation in the NT as to the personification of evil, but not as elaborate as the rabbis. A good example of this difference is the “war in heaven.” The fall of Satan is a logical necessity, but the specifics are not given. Even what is given is veiled in apocalyptic genre (cf. Rev. 12:4,7,12-13). Although Satan is defeated in Jesus and exiled to earth, he still functions as a servant of YHWH (cf. Matt. 4:1; Luke 22:31-32; I Cor. 5:5; I Tim. 1:20).

We must curb our curiosity in this area. There is a personal force of temptation and evil, but there is still only one God and we are still responsible for our choices. There is a spiritual battle, both before

and after salvation. Victory can only come and remain in and through the Triune God. Evil has been defeated and will be removed!

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: SCHEMES

This is the Greek word *noēma*. It is used by Paul five times in II Corinthians and only one other time in Phil. 4:7. It is from the root *nous*, which means mind or thoughts. Paul develops this in two ways.

- A. evil or destructive thinking
  - 1. schemes of Satan, II Cor. 2:11
  - 2. minds hardened and veiled in unbelief, II Cor. 3:14
  - 3. minds blinded by Satan (the god of this world), II Cor. 4:4
  - 4. minds deceived by Satan (like Eve) and led astray, II Cor. 11:3
- B. godly thinking
  - 1. taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ, II Cor. 10:5
  - 2. the peace of God which passes all comprehension (i.e. *nous*) will guard your hearts and your minds (i.e. *noemata*)

Human thinking and language skills are part of the image of God. These wonderful gifts can be used for good or evil. Believers must guard their thoughts and words. Our mind can be tricked, blinded, and manipulated by Satan. They can also be wonderfully energized by God to His glory and for His Kingdom. We are stewards of our thoughts, plans, and motives!

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: THE SECOND COMING

This is literally “until the *Parousia*,” which means “presence” and was used of a royal visit. The other MT terms used for the Second Coming are (1) *epiphaneia*, “face to face appearing”; (2) *apokalupis*, “unveiling”; and (3) “the Day of the Lord” and the variations of this phrase. The antecedent to “Lord” in this passage is both YHWH, as in vv. 10 and 11, and Jesus in vv. 7,8,14. This grammatical ambiguity was a common technique of NT authors to assert the deity of Jesus.

The NT as a whole is written within the world-view of the OT, which asserted

- 1. a current evil, rebellious age
- 2. a coming new age of righteousness
- 3. brought about by the Spirit’s agency through the work of the Messiah (Anointed One)

The theological assumption of progressive revelation is required because the NT authors slightly modify Israel’s expectation. Instead of a military, nationalistic-focused (Israel) coming of the Messiah, there are two comings. The first coming was the incarnation of deity in the conception and birth of Jesus of Nazareth. He came as the non-military, non-judicial “suffering servant” of Isa. 53; also the mild rider on the colt of a donkey (not a war horse or kingly mule), of Zech. 9:9. The first coming inaugurated the New Messianic Age, the Kingdom of God on earth. In one sense the Kingdom is here, but of course, in another it is still far off. It is this tension between the two comings of the Messiah which, in a sense, is the overlapping of the two Jewish ages that was unseen, or at least unclear, from the OT. In reality, this dual coming emphasizes YHWH’s commitment to redeem all humanity (cf. Gen. 3:15; 12:3; Exod. 19:5 and the preaching of the prophets, especially Isaiah and Jonah).

The church is not waiting for the fulfillment of OT prophecy because most prophecies refer to the first coming (cf. *How to Read the Bible For All Its Worth*, pp. 165-166). What believers do anticipate is the glorious coming of the resurrected King of Kings and Lord of Lords, the expected historical fulfillment of the new age of righteousness on earth as it is in heaven (cf. Matt. 6:10). The OT presentations were not inaccurate, but incomplete. He will come again just as the prophets predicted in the power and authority of YHWH.

The Second Coming is not a biblical term, but the concept forms the world-view and framework of the entire NT. God will set it all straight. Fellowship between God and mankind made in His image will be restored. Evil will be judged and removed. God’s purposes will not, cannot, fail!

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: SERVANT LEADERSHIP

God’s leaders are gifts to the church (Eph. 4:11), but they are still servants, not bosses! Paul uses several terms to address the idea of servant/minister in the Corinthian letters.

- 1. domestic help (originally “to raise dust”)
  - a. diakonos, I Cor. 3:5; II Cor. 3:6; 6:4; 11:15 (twice), 23
  - b. *diakonia*, I Cor. 16:15; II Cor. 3:7,8,9 (twice); 4:1; 5:18; 6:3; 8:4; 9:1,13; 11:8
  - c. *dialoneō*, II Cor. 3:3
- 2. servant or assistant, *hupēretēs* (in the NT it is used of many different types of attendants), I Cor. 4:1
- 3. slave (one who is owned and directed by another)
  - a. *doulos*, I Cor. 7:21,22 (twice),23; II Cor. 4:5
  - b. *douloō*, I Cor. 9:19
- 4. co-worker, co-helper (compound of *sun* + worker), *sunergos*, II Cor. 1:24
- 5. supplier (originally one who funds a chorus)
  - a. *chorēgeō*, II Cor. 9:10
  - b. *epichorēgeō*, II Cor. 9:10

6. minister (used in the Septuagint of Joseph to Potiphar, Joshua to Moses, Samuel to Eli, Abishag to David and of the Levites to Israel (i.e. the general term for service in the Septuagint), *leitourgia*, II Cor. 9:12

All of these terms show Paul's understanding of ministry. Believers belong to Christ. As Christ served others (cf. Mark 10:45), believers serve others (cf. I John 3:16). Church leadership is servant leadership (cf. Matt. 20:20-28; Mark 10:32-45; Luke 22:24-27). These arrogant, prideful factions had totally misunderstood the gospel and failed to comprehend the heart and ministry of Jesus!

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

### I. Old Testament

A. All humans go to *She'ol* (etymology uncertain), which is a way of referring to death or the grave, mostly in Wisdom Literature and Isaiah. In the OT it was a shadowy, conscious, but joyless existence (cf. Job 10:21-22; 38:17; Ps. 107:10,14).

B. *She'ol* characterized

1. associated with God's judgment (fire), Deut. 32:22
2. associated with punishment even before Judgment Day, Ps. 18:4-5
3. associated with *Abaddon* (destruction), but also open to God, Job 26:6; Ps. 139:8; Amos 9:2
4. associated with "the Pit" (grave), Ps. 16:10; Isa 14:15; Ezek. 31:15-17
5. wicked descend alive into *She'ol*, Num. 16:30,33; Ps. 55:15
6. personified often as an animal with a large mouth, Num. 16:30; Isa. 5:14; 14:9; Hab. 2:5
7. people there called *Shades*, Isa. 14:9-11)

### II. New Testament

A. The Hebrew *She'ol* is translated by the Greek *Hades* (the unseen world)

B. *Hades* characterized

1. refers to death, Matt. 16:18
2. linked to death, Rev. 1:18; 6:8; 20:13-14
3. often analogous to the place of permanent punishment (*Gehenna*), Matt. 11:23 (OT quote); Luke 10:15; 16:23-24
4. often analogous to the grave, Luke 16:23

C. Possibly divided (rabbis)

1. righteous part called paradise (really another name for heaven, cf. II Cor. 12:4; Rev. 2:7), Luke 23:43
2. wicked part called *Tartarus*, II Pet. 2:4, where it is a holding place for evil angels (cf. Gen. 6; I Enoch)

D. *Gehenna*

1. Reflects the OT phrase, "the valley of the sons of Hinnom," (south of Jerusalem). It was the place where the Phoenician fire god, *Molech* was worshiped by child sacrifice (cf. II Kgs. 16:3; 21:6; II Chr. 28:3; 33:6), which was forbidden in lev. 18:21; 20:2-5
2. Jeremiah changed it from a place of pagan worship into a site of YHWH's judgment (cf. Jer. 7:32; 19:6-7). It became the place of fiery, eternal judgment in I Enoch 90:26-27 and Sib. 1:103.
3. The Jews of Jesus' day were so appalled by their ancestors' participation in pagan worship by child sacrifice, that they turned this area into the garbage dump for Jerusalem. Many of Jesus' metaphors for eternal judgment came from this landfill (fire, smoke, worms, stench, cf. Mark 9:44,46). The term *Gehenna* is used only by Jesus (except in James 3:6).
4. Jesus' usage of *Gehenna*
  - a. fire, Matt. 5:22; 18:9; Mark 9:43
  - b. permanent, Mark 9:48 (Matt. 25:46)
  - c. place of destruction (both soul and body), Matt. 10:28
  - d. paralleled to *She'ol*, Matt. 5:29-30; 18:9
  - e. characterizes the wicked as "son of hell," Matt. 23:15
  - f. result of judicial sentence, Matt. 23:33; Luke 12:5
  - g. the concept of *Gehenna* is parallel to the second death (cf. Rev. 2:11; 20:6,14) or the lake of fire (cf. Matt. 13:42,50; Rev. 19:20; 20:10,14-15; 21:8). It is possible the lake of fire becomes the permanent dwelling place of humans (from *She'ol*) and evil angels (from *Tartarus*, II Pet. 2:4; Jude 6 or the abyss, cf. Luke 8:31; Rev. 9:1-10; 20:1,3).
  - h. it was not designed for humans, but for Satan and his angels, Matt. 25:41

E. It is possible, because of the overlap of *She'ol*, *Hades*, and *Gehenna* that

1. originally all humans went to *She'ol/Hades*
2. their experience there (good or bad) is exacerbated after Judgment Day, but the place of the wicked remains the same (this is why the KJV translated *hades* (grave) as *gehenna* (hell).
3. only NT text to mention torment before Judgment is the parable of Luke 16:19-31 (Lazarus and the Rich Man). *She'ol* is also described as a place of punishment now (cf. Deut. 32:22; Ps. 18:1-5). However, one can not establish a doctrine on a parable.

### III. Intermediate state between death and resurrection

A. The NT does not teach the "immortality of the soul," which is one of several ancient views of the after life.

1. human souls exist before their physical life
2. human souls are eternal before and after physical death
3. often the physical body is seen as a prison and death as release back to pre-existent state

B. The NT hints at a disembodied state between death and resurrection



1. Jesus speaks of a division between body and soul, Matt. 10:28
2. Abraham may have a body now, Mark 12:26-27; Luke 16:23
3. Moses and Elijah have a physical body at the transfiguration, Matt. 17
4. Paul asserts that at the Second Coming the souls with Christ will get their new bodies first, II Thess. 4:13-18
5. Paul asserts that believers get their new spiritual bodies on Resurrection Day, I Cor. 15:23,52
6. Paul asserts that believers do not go to *Hades*, but at death are with Jesus, II Cor. 5:6,8; Phil. 1:23. Jesus overcame death and took the righteous to heaven with Him, I Pet. 3:18-22.

#### IV. Heaven

- A. This term is used in three senses in the Bible.
  1. the atmosphere above the earth, Gen. 1:1,8; Isa. 42:5; 45:18
  2. the starry heavens, Gen. 1:14; Deut. 10:14; Ps. 148:4; Heb. 4:14; 7:26
  3. the place of God's throne, Deut. 10:14; I Kgs. 8:27; Ps. 148:4; Eph. 4:10; Heb. 9:24 (third heaven, II Cor. 12:2)
- B. The Bible does not reveal much about the afterlife. Probably because fallen humans have no way or capacity to understand (cf. I Cor. 2:9).
- C. Heaven is both a place (cf. John 14:2-3) and a person (cf. II Cor. 5:6,8). Heaven may be a restored Garden of Eden (Gen. 1-2; Rev. 21-22). The earth will be cleansed and restored (cf. Acts 3:21; Rom. 8:21; II Pet. 3:10). The image of God (Gen. 1:26-27) is restored in Christ. Now the intimate fellowship of the Garden of Eden is possible again.

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### SPECIAL TOPIC: WHAT IS SIN UNTO DEATH?

- A. Hermeneutical considerations
  1. proper identification must be related to the historical setting of I John
    - a. the presence of gnostic false teachers in the churches (cf. 2:19,26; 3:7; II John 7)
      - 1) "Cerinthian" gnostics taught that the man Jesus received the Christ spirit at his baptism and that the Christ spirit left before his death on the cross (cf. 5:6-8)
      - 2) docetic gnostics taught that Jesus was a divine spirit, not a true human being (cf. 1:1-3)
      - 3) gnosticism revealed in the writings of the second century reflected two different views about the human body
        - a) since salvation was a truth revealed to the mind, the human body was irrelevant to the spiritual realm. Therefore, whatever it desired it could have. These are often referred to as antinomian or libertine gnostics.
        - b) the other group concluded that since the body was inherently evil (i.e. Greek thought), any bodily desire should be shunned. These are called ascetic gnostics.
    - b. these false teachers had left the church (cf. 2:19), but their influence had not!
  2. proper identification must be related to the literary context of the whole book
    - a. I John was written to combat false teaching and assure the true believers
    - b. these two purposes can be seen in the tests of true believers
      - 1) doctrinal
        - a) Jesus was truly human (cf. 1:1-3; 4:14)
        - b) Jesus was truly God (cf. 1:2; 5:20)
        - c) humans are sinful and responsible to a holy God (cf. 1:6,10)
        - d) humans are also forgiven and made right with God by
          - i) Jesus' death (cf. 1:7; 2:1-2; 3:16; 4:9-10,14; 5:6-8)
          - ii) faith in Jesus (cf. 1:9; 3:23; 4:15; 5:1,4-5,10-12,13)
      - 2) practical (positive)
        - a) lifestyle obedience (cf. 2:3-5; 3:22,24; 5:2-3)
        - b) lifestyle love (2:10; 3:11,14,18,23; 4:7,11-12,16-18,21)
        - c) lifestyle Christlikeness (does not sin, cf. 1:7; 2:6,29; 3:6-9; 5:18)
        - d) lifestyle victory over evil (cf. 2:13,14; 4:4; 5:4)
        - e) His word abides in them (cf. 1:10; 2:14)
        - f) they have the Spirit (cf. 3:24; 4:4-6,13)
        - g) answered prayer (cf. 5:14-15)
      - 3) practical (negative)
        - a) lifestyle sin (cf. 3:8-10)
        - b) lifestyle hate (cf. 2:9,11; 3:15; 4:20)
        - c) lifestyle disobedience (cf. 2:4; 3:4)
        - d) love the world (cf. 2:15-16)
        - e) deny Christ (denies Father and Son, cf. 2:22-23; 4:2-3; 5:10-12)
  3. proper identification must be linked to specific items in the relevant text (cf. 5:16-17)
    - a. does the term "brother" of v. 16 relate to both those committing a sin not leading to death and to those committing a sin leading to death?
    - b. were the offenders once members of the church (cf. 2:19)?
    - c. what is the textual significance of



- 1) no article with “sin”?
  - 2) the verb “sees” as a THIRD CLASS CONDITIONAL with AORIST ACTIVE SUBJUNCTIVE?
  4. how can the prayers of one Christian (cf. James 5:15-16) restore eternal life “*zōē*” to another without the sinner’s personal repentance?
  - e. how does v. 17 relate to the types of sin (unto death, not unto death)?
- B. Theological problems
1. should an interpreter try to link this text with
    - a. the “unpardonable” sin of the Gospels
    - b. the “once out” sin of Heb. 6 and 10

The context of I John does seem parallel to the unpardonable sin of the Pharisees in Jesus’ day (cf. Matt. 12:22-37; Mark 3:2-29) as well as the unbelieving Jews of Heb. 6 and 10. All three groups (Pharisees, unbelieving Jews, and gnostic false teachers) heard the gospel clearly, but refused to trust Jesus Christ.
  2. should modern denominational questions be a theological grid to view this text?
 

Evangelicalism has overemphasized the beginning of the Christian experience and neglected the ongoing lifestyle evidences of true faith. Our modern theological questions would have shocked first century Christians. We want “certainty” based on selected biblical “proof-texts” and our own logical deductions or denominational biases.

Our theological questions, grids, and distinctives reflect our own insecurities. We want more information and clarification than the Bible provides, so our systematic theologies take some small chunks of Scripture and weave huge webs of logical, western, specific doctrines! Jesus’ words in Matt. 7 and Mark 7 were adequate for the early church! Jesus looks for disciples, not decisions, long term lifestyle faith, not short-term emotional faith (cf. Matt. 13:10-23; John 8:31-59). Christianity is not an isolated past act, but an ongoing repentance, faith, obedience, and perseverance. Christianity is not a ticket to heaven, purchased in the past, nor a fire insurance policy taken out to protect one from a lifestyle of selfish, godless living!
  3. Does the sin unto death refer to physical death or eternal death? John’s use of *zōē* in this context implies the contrast refers to eternal death. Is it possible that God takes home (physical death) sinning children? The implication of this context is that (1) the prayers of fellow believers and (2) the personal repentance of the offender combine to restore the believers, but if they continue in a lifestyle that brings reproach on the believing community, then the result may be an “untimely” or early physical departure from this life (cf. *When Critics Ask* by Norman Geisler and Thomas Howe, p. 541)
- However, this may be metaphorical (heaven as a huge, cubed city of Rev. 21:9-27) and not literal. I Corinthians 15 describes the difference between the physical body and the spiritual body as the seed to the mature plant. Again I Cor. 2:9 (a quote from Isa. 64:4 and 65:17) is a great promise and hope! I know that when we see Him we will be like Him (cf. I John 3:2).
- V. Helpful resources
- A. William Hendriksen, *The Bible On the Life Hereafter*
  - B. Maurice Rawlings, *Beyond Death’s Door*

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: SILAS/SILVANUS

- Silas, or Silvanus, was the man Paul chose to go with him on the second missionary journey after Barnabas and John Mark went back to Cyprus.
- A. He is first mentioned in the Bible in Acts 15:22, where he is called a chief man among the brethren of the Jerusalem Church.
  - B. He was also a prophet (cf. Acts 15:32).
  - C. He was a Roman citizen like Paul (cf. Acts 16:37).
  - D. He and Judas Barsabbas were sent to Antioch by the Jerusalem Church to inspect the situation (cf. Acts 15:22,30-35).
  - E. Paul mentions him in II Cor. 1:19 as a fellow gospel preacher.
  - F. Later he is identified with Peter in writing I Peter. (cf. I Pet. 5:12).
  - G. Both Paul and Peter call him Silvanus, while Luke calls him Silas (the Aramaic form of Saul). It is possible that Silas was his Jewish name and Silvanus his Latin name (cf. F. F. Bruce, *Paul: Apostle of the Heart Set Free*, p. 213).

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: PAUL’S ADMONITIONS TO SLAVES

1. Be content, but if an opportunity for freedom avails itself, take it (I Cor. 7:21-24)
2. In Christ there is no slave or free (Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:11; cf. I Cor. 12:13)
3. Work as unto the Lord; He will repay (Eph. 6:5-9; Col. 3:22-25; cf. I Pet. 2:18-20)
4. In Christ slaves become brothers (I Tim. 6:2; Philemon vv. 16-17)
5. Godly slaves bring honor to God (I Tim. 6:1; Titus 2:9)

Paul’s admonition to slave owners:

Christian slaves and slave owners have the same master; therefore, they should treat each other with respect (Ephesians 6:9; Colossians 4:1).

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: THE SON OF GOD

This is one of the major NT titles for Jesus. It surely has divine connotations. It included Jesus as “the Son” or “My Son” and God addressed as “Father.” It occurs in the NT over 124 times. Even Jesus’ self-designation as “Son of Man” has a divine connotation from Dan. 7:13-14.

In the OT the designation “son” could refer to three specific groups.

1. angels (usually in the PLURAL, cf. Gen. 6:2; Job 1:6; 2:1)
2. the King of Israel (cf. II Sam. 7:14; Ps. 2:7; 89:26-27)
3. the nation of Israel as a whole (cf. Exod. 4:22-23; Deut. 14:1; Hos. 11:1; Mal. 2:10)
4. Israeli judges (cf. Ps. 82:6)

It is the second usage that is linked to Jesus. In this way “son of David” and “son of God” both relate to II Sam. 7; Ps. 2 and 89. In the OT “son of God” is never used specifically of the Messiah, except as the eschatological king as one of the “anointed offices” of Israel. However, in the Dead Sea Scrolls the title with Messianic implications is common (see specific references in *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*, p. 770). Also “Son of God” is a Messianic title in two interbiblical Jewish apocalyptic works (cf. II Esdras 7:28; 13:32,37,52; 14:9 and I Enoch 105:2).

Its NT background as it refers to Jesus is best summarized by several categories:

1. His pre-existence (cf. John 1:1-18)
2. His unique (virgin) birth (cf. Matt. 1:23; Luke 1:31-35)
3. His baptism (cf. Matt. 3:17; Mark 1:11; Luke 3:22. God’s voice from heaven unites the royal king of Ps. 2 with the suffering servant of Isa. 53).
4. His satanic temptation (cf. Matt. 4:1-11; Mark 1:12,13; Luke 4:1-13. He is tempted to doubt His sonship or at least to accomplish its purpose by different means than the cross).
5. His affirmation by unacceptable confessors
  - a. demons (cf. Mark 1:23-25; Luke 4:31-37; Mark 3:11-12)
  - b. unbelievers (cf. Matt. 27:43; Mark 14:61; John 19:7)
6. His affirmation by His disciples
  - a. Matt. 14:33; 16:16
  - b. John 1:34,49; 6:69; 11:27
7. His self affirmation
  - a. Matthew 11:25-27
  - b. John 10:36
8. His use of the familial metaphor of God as Father
  - a. His use of “abba” for God
    - 1) Mark 14:36
    - 2) Romans 8:15
    - 3) Galatians 4:6
  - b. His recurrent use of Father (*patēr*) to describe His relationship to deity

In summary, the title “Son of God” had great theological meaning for those who knew the OT and its promises and categories, but the NT writers were nervous about its use with Gentiles because of their pagan background of “the gods” taking women with the resulting offspring being “the titans” or “giants.”

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: “the sons of God” in Genesis

- A. There is great controversy over the identification of the phrase “the sons of God.” There have been three major interpretations
  1. the phrase refers to the godly line of Seth (cf. Gen 5, see note at 4:14)
  2. the phrase refers to a group of angelic beings
  3. the phrase refers to the kings or tyrants or Cain’s line (cf. Gen. 4)
- B. Evidence for the phrase referring to Seth’s line
  1. The immediate literary context of Gen. 4 and 5 shows the development of the rebellious line of Cain and the chosen line of Seth, therefore, contextual evidence seems to favor the godly line of Seth.
  2. the rabbis have been divided over their understanding of this passage. Some assert that it refers to Seth (but most to angels).
  3. The plural phrase “the sons of God,” though most often used for angelic beings, rarely refers to human beings.
    - a. Deut. 14:1; 32:5
    - b. Psalm 73:15; 82:1-4
    - c. Hosea 1:10
- C. Evidence for the phrase referring to angelic beings
  1. this has been the most common traditional understanding of the passage. The larger context of Genesis could support this view as another example of supernatural evil trying to thwart God’s will for mankind (the rabbis say out of jealousy)

2. the plural phrase is used overwhelmingly for angels
    - a. Job 1:6
    - b. Job 2:1
    - c. Job 38:7
    - d. Daniel 3:25
    - e. Psalm 29:1
    - f. Psalm 89:6,7
  3. the inter-testamental book of I Enoch (cf. I Enoch 6:1-8:4; 12:4-6; 19:1-3; 21:1-10) and Jubilees 5:1, which was very popular among believers in the NT period, along with the *Genesis Apocryphon* from the Dead Sea Scrolls, and *Jubilees* 5:1 interprets these as rebellious angels.
  4. The immediate context of chapter 6 seems to imply that “the mighty men who were of old, men of renown” came from this improper mixing of the orders of creation.
  5. The Septuagint translates the phrase “sons of God” as “angels of God.”
  6. I Enoch even asserts that Noah’s Flood came to destroy this angelic/human union which was hostile towards YHWH and His plan for creation (cf. I Enoch 7:1ff; 15:1ff; 86:1ff).
  7. In Ugaritic literature “sons of God” refers to members of the pantheon (i.e. lesser spiritual beings).
- D. Evidence for the phrase referring to kings or tyrants
1. There are several ancient translations that support this view.
    - a. Targum of Onkelos (second century A.D.) translates “sons of God” as “Sons of nobles”
    - b. Symmachus (second century A.D.) Greek translation of the OT, translated “sons of God” as “the sons of the kings”
    - c. the term “*elohim*” used of Israelite leaders (cf. Ex. 21:6; 22:8; Ps. 82:1,6)
    - d. *Nephilim* linked to *Gibborim* in Gen 6:4, *Gibborim* is from *Gibbor* meaning “a mighty man of valor; strength; wealth or power”
    - e. this interpretation and its evidence is taken from Hard Sayings of the Bible pp. 106-108.
- E. Historical evidence of the advocates of both usages
1. the phrase refers to Sethites
 

a. Cyril of Alexander	e. Calvin
b. Theodoret	f. Kyle
c. Augustine	g. Gleason Archer
d. Jerome	
  2. the phrase refers to angelic beings
 

a. writers of the Septuagint	g. Tertullian	m. Olford
b. Philo	h. Origen	n. Westermann
c. Josephus ( <i>Antiquities</i> 1:3:1)	i. Luther	o. Wenham
d. Justin Martyr	j. Ewald	
e. Irenaeus	k. Delitzsch	
f. Clement of Alexandria	l. Hengstenberg	
- F. How are the “Nephilim” of Gen. 6:4 related to the “sons of God” and “the daughters of men” of Gen. 6:1-2?
1. They are the resultant giants (cf. Num. 13:33) of the union between angels and human women.
  2. They do not relate at all. They are simply mentioned as being on the earth in the days of the events of Gen. 6:1-2 and also afterwards.
  3. R. K. Harrison in *Introduction to the Old Testament*, p. 557, has the following cryptic quote, “to miss entirely the invaluable anthropological insights into the interrelation of *Homo sapiens* and pre-Adamic species which the passage contains, and which are amenable to those scholars who are equipped to pursue them.”  
This implies to me that he sees these two groups as representing differing groups of humanoids. This would ply a later special creation of Adam and Eve, but also an evolutionary development of *Homo erectus*.
- G. It is only fair to disclose my own understanding of this controversial text. First, let me remind all of us that the text in Genesis is brief and ambiguous. Moses’ first hearers must have had additional historical insight or Moses used oral or written tradition from the Patriarchal period that he himself did not fully understand. This issue is not a crucial theological subject. We are often curious about things the Scriptures only hint at but are ambiguous. It would be very unfortunate to build an elaborate theology out of this and similar fragments of biblical information. If we needed this information God would have provided it in a more clear and complete form. I personally believe it was angels and humans because:
1. the consistent, although not exclusive, use of the phrase “sons of God” for angels in the OT
  2. the Septuagint (Alexandrian) translates (late first century B.C.) “sons of God” as “angels of God”
  3. the pseudepigraphal apocalyptic book of I Enoch (possibly written about 200 B.C.) is very specific that it refers to angels (cf. chapters 6-7)
  4. the theological link to II Pet. 2 and Jude of angels who sinned and did not keep their proper abode  
I know that to some this seems to contradict Matt. 22:30, but these specific angels are neither in heaven nor earth but in a special prison (*Tartarus*).
  5. I think that one reason many of the events of Gen. 1-11 are found in other cultures (i.e. similar creation accounts, similar flood accounts, similar accounts of angels taking women) is because all humans were together and had some knowledge of YHWH during this period, but after the tower of Babel’s dispersion this knowledge became corrupted and adapted to a polytheistic model.  
A good example of this is Greek mythology where the half human/half superhuman giants called Titans are imprisoned in *Tartarus*, this very name used only once in the Bible (cf. II Peter 2) for the holding place of the angels that did not keep their proper abode. In rabbinical theology Hades was divided into a section for the righteous (paradise) and a section for the wicked (*Tartarus*).

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: SOPHISTS

The Greek word *sophia* means wisdom. The related term *sophistēs* came to denote someone “skilled” or “educated in rhetoric.” It usually denoted a public speaker, often itinerant, who come to a town and tried to start a school to train the children of the elite class. This public speaking is what caused the parents to seek them out for private lessons or schooling of their children.

There was a tremendous competition between these “wise men” related to their reputations and ability to attract students. There was even a set of guidelines for their initial speaking opportunities. One of these set procedures was a time for the philosopher to list his qualifications and strength.

Paul’s problems at Corinth seem to be related to

A. factions in the Church, each claiming to follow a particular teacher (I Cor. 1-4)

B. Hellenistic trained Jewish false teachers from Jerusalem (II Cor. 10-13)

Paul’s disclaimer of “wisdom” in I Cor. 1-4 set the stage for his being attacked by those who gloried in their philosophical, rhetorical training and judged all others in light of these criteria. It is surprising that Jewish teachers would have gloried in philosophical categories, but a precedent is set in Judaism by Philo of Alexandria and possibly even the training and background of Apollos of Alexandria.

Paul was not a polished public speaker. He was attacked for this. He retaliates by writing polished, balanced, well- constructed, rhetorical form in II Cor. 10-13. He uses their terms, their forms and exposes their improper attitudes and arrogance.

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: HUMAN SPEECH

### I. OPENING THOUGHTS FROM PROVERBS

- A. Language is part of the image of God in mankind (i.e. creation is spoken into existence and God talks to His human creation). It is a vital part of our personhood.
- B. Human speech enables us to communicate to others how we feel about life. Therefore, it reveals who we really are (Prov. 18:2; 4:23 [20-27]). Speech is the acid test of the person (Prov. 23:7).
- C. We are social creatures. We are concerned with acceptance and affirmation. We need it from God and from our fellow humans. Words have the power to meet these needs in both positive (Prov. 17:10) and negative (Prov. 12:18) ways.
- D. There is tremendous power in human speech (Prov. 18:20-21)—power to bless and heal (Prov. 10:11,21) and power to curse and destroy (Prov. 11:9).
- E. We reap what we sow (Prov. 12:14).

### II. PRINCIPLES FROM PROVERBS

- A. The negative and destructive potential of human speech
  - 1. the words of evil men (1:11-19; 10:6; 11:9,11; 12:2-6)
  - 2. the words of the adulteress (5:2-5; 6:24-35; 7:5ff; 9:13-18; 22:14)
  - 3. the words of the liar (6:12-15,19; 10:18; 12:17-19,22; 14:5,25; 17:4; 19:5,9,28; 21:28; 24:28; 25:18; 26:23-28)
  - 4. the words of the fool (10:10,14; 14:3; 15:14; 18:6-8)
  - 5. the words of false witnesses (6:19; 12:17; 19:5,9,28; 21:28; 24:28; 25:18)
  - 6. the words of a gossip (6:14,19; 11:13; 16:27-28; 20:19; 25:23; 26:20)
  - 7. the words too quickly spoken (6:1-5; 12:18; 20:25; 29:20)
  - 8. the words of flattery (29:5)
  - 9. too many words (10:14,19,23; 11:13; 13:3,16; 14:23; 15:2; 17:27-28; 18:2; 21:23; 29:20)
  - 10. perverted words (17:20; 19:1)
- B. the positive, healing and edifying potential of human speech
  - 1. the words of the righteous (10:11,20-21,31-32; 12:14; 13:2; 15:23; 16:13; 18:20)
  - 2. the words of the discerning (10:13; 11:12)
  - 3. the words of knowledge (15:1,4,7,8; 20:15)
  - 4. the words of healing (15:4)
  - 5. the words of a gentle answer (15:1,4,18,23; 16:1; 25:15)
  - 6. the words of a pleasant answer (12:25; 15:26,30; 16:24)
  - 7. the words of the law (22:17-21)

### III. THE OT PATTERN CONTINUES IN THE NT

- A. Human speech enables us to communicate to others how we feel about life; therefore, it reveals who we really are (Matt. 15:1-20; Mark 7:2-23).
- B. We are social creatures. We are concerned with acceptance and affirmation. We need it from God and from our fellow man. Words have the power to meet these needs in both positive (II Tim. 3:15-17) and negative (James 3:2-12) ways.
- C. There is tremendous power in human speech; power to bless (Eph. 4:29) and power to curse (James 3:9). We are responsible for what we say (James 3:2-12).
- D. We will be judged by our words (Matt. 12:33-37; Luke 6:39-45) as well as our deeds (Matt. 25:31-46). We reap what we sow (Gal. 6:7).

## **SPECIAL TOPIC: JESUS AND THE SPIRIT**

There is a fluidity between the work of the Spirit and the Son. G. Campbell Morgan said the best name for the Spirit is “the other Jesus.” The following is an outline comparison of the work and titles of the Son and Spirit.

1. Spirit called “Spirit of Jesus” or similar expressions (cf. Rom. 8:9; II Cor. 3:17; Gal. 4:6; I Pet. 1:11).
2. Both called by the same terms
  - a. “truth”
    - 1) Jesus (John 14:6)
    - 2) Spirit (John 14:17; 16:13)
  - b. “advocate”
    - 1) Jesus (I John 2:1)
    - 2) Spirit (John 14:16,26; 15:26; 16:7)
  - c. “Holy”
    - 1) Jesus (Luke 1:35; 14:26)
    - 2) Spirit (Luke 1:35)
3. Both indwell believers
  - a. Jesus (Matt. 28:20; John 14:20,23; 15:4-5; Rom. 8:10; II Cor. 13:5; Gal. 2:20; Eph. 3:17; Col. 1:27)
  - b. Spirit (John 14:16-17; Rom. 8:9,11; I Cor. 3:16; 6:19; II Tim. 1:14)
  - c. and even the Father (John 14:23; II Cor. 6:16)

## **SPECIAL TOPIC: SPIRIT (*PNEUMA*)**

The Greek term for “spirit” is used in several ways in the NT. Here are some representative classifications and examples.

- A. of the Triune God
  1. of the Father (cf. John 4:24)
  2. of the Son (cf. Rom. 8:9-10; II Cor. 3:17; Gal. 4:6; I Pet. 1:11)
  3. of the Holy Spirit (cf. Mark 1:11; Matt. 3:16; 10:20; John 3:5,6,8; 7:39; 14:17; Acts 2:4; 5:9; 8:29,35; Rom. 1:4; 8:11,16; I Cor. 2:4,10,11,13,14; 12:7)
- B. of the human life force
  1. of Jesus (cf. Mark 8:12; John 11:33,38; 13:21)
  2. of mankind (cf. Matt. 22:43; Acts 7:59; 17:16; 20:22; Rom. 1:9; 8:16; I Cor. 2:11; 5:3-5; 7:34; 15:45; 16:18; II Cor. 2:13; 7:13; Phil. 4:23; Col. 2:5)
- C. of the spiritual realm
  1. spiritual beings
    - a. good (i.e. angels, cf. Acts 23:8-9; Heb. 1:14)
    - b. evil (i.e. demonic, cf. Matt. 8:16; 10:1; 12:43,45; Acts 5:16; 8:7; 16:16; 19:12-21; Eph. 6:12)
    - c. ghosts (cf. Luke 24:37)
  2. spiritual discernment (cf. Matt. 5:3; 26:41; John 3:6; 4:23; Acts 18:25; 19:21; Rom. 2:29; 7:6; 8:4,10; 12:11; I Cor. 14:37)
  3. spiritual things (cf. John 6:63; Rom. 2:29; 8:2,5,9,15; 15:27; I Cor. 9:11; 14:12)
  4. spiritual gifts (cf. I Cor. 12:1; 14:1)
  5. inspiration of the Spirit (cf. Matt. 22:43; Luke 2:27; Eph. 1:17)
  6. spiritual body (cf. I Cor. 15:44-45)
- D. Characterizes
  1. the attitude of the world (cf. Rom. 8:15; 11:8; I Cor. 2:12)
  2. thinking process of humans (cf. Acts 6:10; Rom. 8:6; I Cor. 4:2)
- E. of the physical realm
  1. wind (cf. Matt. 7:25,27; John 3:8; Acts 2:2)
  2. breath (cf. Acts 17:25; II Thess. 2:8)

It is obvious that this term must be interpreted in light of its immediate context. There are various shades of meaning which can refer to (1) the physical world; (2) the unseen world; (3) as well as persons of this physical world or of the spiritual realm.

The Holy Spirit is that part of the Triune God who is supremely active in this stage of history. The new age of the Spirit has come. All that is good, holy, right, and true relates to Him. His presence, gifts, and ministry are crucial in the furtherance of the gospel and the success of the Kingdom of God (cf. John 14 and 16). He does not draw attention to Himself, but to Christ (cf. John 16:13-14). He convicts, convinces, woos, baptizes, and matures all believers (cf. John 16:8-11).

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: SPIRIT (*PNEUMA*)2

- I. The Greek terms
  - A. *pneō* - to blow
  - B. *pnoē* - wind, breath
  - C. *pneuma* - spirit, wind
  - D. *pneumatikos* - pertaining to the spirit
  - E. *pneumatikōs* - spiritually
- II. Greek philosophical background (*pneuma*)
  - A. Aristotle used the term as the life force that develops from birth until self-discipline.
  - B. The Stoics used the term as synonymous *topsuchē*, (soul) even *nous* (mind) in the sense of the five physical senses and the human intellect.
  - C. Greek thought - the term became equivalent to divine action (i.e. divination, magic, occult, prophecy, etc.).
- III. Old Testament (*ruah*)
  - A. The actions of the monotheistic God (i.e. Spirit, used about 90 times in the OT)
    1. positive - Genesis 1:2
    2. negative - I Sam. 16:14-16,23; I Kgs. 22:21-22; Isa. 29:10
  - B. The God-given life force in humanity (i.e. God's breath, cf. Gen. 2:7)
  - C. The Septuagint translates *ruah* by *pneuma* (used about 100 times in the LXX)
  - D. In later rabbinical writings, apocalyptic writing and the Dead Sea Scrolls, influenced by Zoroastrianism, *pneuma* is used of angels and demons
- IV. New Testament (*pneuma*)
  - A. God's special presence, power, and equipping
  - B. The Spirit is connected to God's activity in the church
    1. prophecy
    2. miracles
    3. boldness to proclaim the gospel
    4. wisdom (i.e. the gospel)
    5. joy
    6. bring the new age
    7. conversion (i.e. wooing and indwelling)
    8. Christlikeness
    9. special gifts of ministry
    10. prays for believers
  - The Spirit awakens mankind's desire for fellowship with God, for which they were created. This fellowship is possible because of the person and work of Jesus, God's Messiah. The new spiritual awakening leads to Christlike living, serving, and trusting.
  - C. Best understood as a spiritual continuum with the Holy Spirit on one end and mankind as a physical creature of this planet, but also a spiritual creature in God's image at the other end.
  - D. Paul is the NT author who develops a theology of the Spirit/spirit.
    1. Paul uses Spirit to contrast flesh (i.e. sin nature)
    2. Paul uses spirit to contrast the physical
    3. Paul uses Spirit/spirit to contrast human thinking, knowing, and being
  - E. Some examples from I Corinthians
    - a. the Holy Spirit, 12:3
    - b. the power and wisdom of God conveyed through the Holy Spirit, 2:4-5
    - c. God's actions in the believer
      - (1) new mind-set, 2:12; 14:14,32
      - (2) new temple, 3:16; 6:19-20
      - (3) new life (i.e. morality), 6:9-11
      - (4) new life symbolized in baptism, 12:13
      - (5) one with God (i.e. conversion), 6:17
      - (6) God's wisdom, not the world's wisdom, 2:12-15; 14:14,32,37
      - (7) spiritual giftedness of every believer for ministry, chapters 12 and 14
    - d. the spiritual in contrast to the physical, 9:11; 10:3; 15:44
    - e. spiritual realm in contrast to physical realm, 2:11; 5:5; 7:34; 15:45; 16:18
    - f. a way of referring to a human's spiritual/inner life as distinct from one's physical body, 7:34
  - F. Humans live in two realms by creation (i.e. the physical and the spiritual). Mankind fell from intimacy with God (Gen. 3). Through Christ's life, teachings, death, resurrection, and promised return, the Spirit woos fallen humans to exercise faith in the gospel, at which point they are restored to fellowship with God. The Spirit is that personal part of the Trinity which characterizes the New Age of righteousness. The Spirit is God the Father's agent and the Son's Advocate in this "age." A problem exists because the new age has occurred in time, while the old age of sinful rebellion still exists. The Spirit transforms the old into the new, even while they both exist.

## **SPECIAL TOPIC: STAND (*HISTĒMI*)**

This common term is used in several theological senses in the New Testament

1. to establish
  - a. the OT Law, Rom. 3:31
  - b. one's own righteousness, Rom. 10:3
  - c. the new covenant, Heb. 10:9
  - d. a charge, II Cor. 13:1
  - e. God's truth, II Tim. 2:19
2. to resist spiritually
  - a. the devil, Eph. 6:11
  - b. the day of judgment, Rev. 6:17
3. to resist by standing one's ground
  - a. military metaphor, Eph. 6:14
  - b. civil metaphor, Rom. 14:4
4. a position in truth, John 8:44
5. a position in grace
  - a. Rom. 5:2
  - b. I Cor. 15:1
  - c. I Pet. 5:12
6. a position in faith
  - a. Rom. 11:20
  - b. I Cor. 7:37
  - c. I Cor. 15:1
  - d. II Cor. 1:24
7. a position of arrogance, I Cor. 10:12

This term expresses both the covenantal grace and mercy of a sovereign God and the fact that believers need to respond to it and cling to it by faith! Both are biblical truths. They must be held together!

## **SPECIAL TOPIC: SUBMISSION (*HUPOTASSŌ*)**

The Septuagint uses this term to translate ten different Hebrew words. Its basic OT meaning was "to order" or "the right of command." This is picked up in the LXX.

1. God commands (cf. Lev. 10:1; Jonah 2:1; 4:6-8)
2. Moses commands (cf. Exod. 36:6; Deut. 27:1)
3. kings command (cf. II Chr. 31:13)

In the NT this sense continues as in Acts 10:48, where an Apostle commands. However, new connotations are developed in the NT.

1. a voluntary aspect develops (often MIDDLE VOICE)
2. this self-limiting action can be seen in Jesus submitting to the Father (cf. Luke 2:51)
3. believers submit to aspects of culture so that the gospel will not be adversely affected
  - a. all believers (cf. Eph. 5:21)
  - b. believing wives (cf. Col. 3:18; Eph. 5:22-24; Titus 2:5; I Pet. 3:1)
  - c. believers to pagan governments (cf. Rom. 13:1-7; I Pet. 2:13)

Believers act out of motives of love, for God, for Christ, for the Kingdom, for the good of others.

Like *agapaō* the church filled this term with new meaning based on the needs of the Kingdom and the needs of others. This term takes on a new nobility of selflessness, not based on a command, but on a new relationship to a self-giving God and Messiah. Believers obey and submit for the good of the whole and the blessing of the family of God.

## **SPECIAL TOPIC: WHERE ARE THE DEAD?**



## I. Old Testament

- A. All humans go to *She'ol* (etymology uncertain), which is a way of referring to death or the grave, mostly in Wisdom Literature and Isaiah. In the OT it was a shadowy, conscious, but joyless existence (cf. Job 10:21-22; 38:17; Ps. 107:10,14).
- B. *She'ol* characterized
  - 1. associated with God's judgment (fire), Deut. 32:22
  - 2. associated with punishment even before Judgment Day, Ps. 18:4-5
  - 3. associated with *Abaddon* (destruction), but also open to God, Job 26:6; Ps. 139:8; Amos 9:2
  - 4. associated with "the Pit" (grave), Ps. 16:10; Isa 14:15; Ezek. 31:15-17
  - 5. wicked descend alive into *She'ol*, Num. 16:30,33; Ps. 55:15
  - 6. personified often as an animal with a large mouth, Num. 16:30; Isa. 5:14; 14:9; Hab. 2:5
  - 7. people there called *Shades*, Isa. 14:9-11)

## II. New Testament

- A. The Hebrew *She'ol* is translated by the Greek *Hades* (the unseen world)
- B. *Hades* characterized
  - 1. refers to death, Matt. 16:18
  - 2. linked to death, Rev. 1:18; 6:8; 20:13-14
  - 3. often analogous to the place of permanent punishment (*Gehenna*), Matt. 11:23 (OT quote); Luke 10:15; 16:23-24
  - 4. often analogous to the grave, Luke 16:23
- C. Possibly divided (rabbis)
  - 1. righteous part called paradise (really another name for heaven, cf. II Cor. 12:4; Rev. 2:7), Luke 23:43
  - 2. wicked part called *Tartarus*, II Pet. 2:4, where it is a holding place for evil angels (cf. Gen. 6; I Enoch)
- D. *Gehenna*
  - 1. Reflects the OT phrase, "the valley of the sons of Hinnom," (south of Jerusalem). It was the place where the Phoenician fire god, *Molech* was worshiped by child sacrifice (cf. II Kgs. 16:3; 21:6; II Chr. 28:3; 33:6), which was forbidden in Lev. 18:21; 20:2-5
  - 2. Jeremiah changed it from a place of pagan worship into a site of YHWH's judgment (cf. Jer. 7:32; 19:6-7). It became the place of fiery, eternal judgment in I Enoch 90:26-27 and Sib. 1:103.
  - 3. The Jews of Jesus' day were so appalled by their ancestors' participation in pagan worship by child sacrifice, that they turned this area into the garbage dump for Jerusalem. Many of Jesus' metaphors for eternal judgment came from this landfill (fire, smoke, worms, stench, cf. Mark 9:44,46). The term *Gehenna* is used only by Jesus (except in James 3:6).
  - 4. Jesus' usage of *Gehenna*
    - a. fire, Matt. 5:22; 18:9; Mark 9:43
    - b. permanent, Mark 9:48 (Matt. 25:46)
    - c. place of destruction (both soul and body), Matt. 10:28
    - d. paralleled to *She'ol*, Matt. 5:29-30; 18:9
    - e. characterizes the wicked as "son of hell," Matt. 23:15
    - f. result of judicial sentence, Matt. 23:33; Luke 12:5
    - g. the concept of *Gehenna* is parallel to the second death (cf. Rev. 2:11; 20:6,14) or the lake of fire (cf. Matt. 13:42,50; Rev. 19:20; 20:10,14-15; 21:8). It is possible the lake of fire becomes the permanent dwelling place of humans (from *She'ol*) and evil angels (from *Tartarus*, II Pet. 2:4; Jude 6 or the abyss, cf. Luke 8:31; Rev. 9:1-10; 20:1,3).
    - h. it was not designed for humans, but for Satan and his angels, Matt. 25:41
- E. It is possible, because of the overlap of *She'ol*, *Hades*, and *Gehenna* that
  - 1. originally all humans went to *She'ol/Hades*
  - 2. their experience there (good or bad) is exacerbated after Judgment Day, but the place of the wicked remains the same (this is why the KJV translated *hades* (grave) as *gehenna* (hell)).
  - 3. only NT text to mention torment before Judgment is the parable of Luke 16:19-31 (Lazarus and the Rich Man). *She'ol* is also described as a place of punishment now (cf. Deut. 32:22; Ps. 18:1-5). However, one can not establish a doctrine on a parable.

## III. Intermediate state between death and resurrection

- A. The NT does not teach the "immortality of the soul," which is one of several ancient views of the after life.
  - 1. human souls exist before their physical life
  - 2. human souls are eternal before and after physical death
  - 3. often the physical body is seen as a prison and death as release back to pre-existent state
- B. The NT hints at a disembodied state between death and resurrection
  - 1. Jesus speaks of a division between body and soul, Matt. 10:28
  - 2. Abraham may have a body now, Mark 12:26-27; Luke 16:23
  - 3. Moses and Elijah have a physical body at the transfiguration, Matt. 17
  - 4. Paul asserts that at the Second Coming the souls with Christ will get their new bodies first, II Thess. 4:13-18
  - 5. Paul asserts that believers get their new spiritual bodies on Resurrection Day, I Cor. 15:23,52
  - 6. Paul asserts that believers do not go to *Hades*, but at death are with Jesus, II Cor. 5:6,8; Phil. 1:23. Jesus overcame death and took the righteous to heaven with Him, I Pet. 3:18-22.

## IV. Heaven

- A. This term is used in three senses in the Bible.
  - 1. the atmosphere above the earth, Gen. 1:1,8; Isa. 42:5; 45:18
  - 2. the starry heavens, Gen. 1:14; Deut. 10:14; Ps. 148:4; Heb. 4:14; 7:26
  - 3. the place of God's throne, Deut. 10:14; I Kgs. 8:27; Ps. 148:4; Eph. 4:10; Heb. 9:24 (third heaven, II Cor. 12:2)

- B. The Bible does not reveal much about the afterlife. Probably because fallen humans have no way or capacity to understand (cf. I Cor. 2:9).
- C. Heaven is both a place (cf. John 14:2-3) and a person (cf. II Cor. 5:6,8). Heaven may be a restored Garden of Eden (Gen. 1-2; Rev. 21-22). The earth will be cleansed and restored (cf. Acts 3:21; Rom. 8:21; II Pet. 3:10). The image of God (Gen. 1:26-27) is restored in Christ. Now the intimate fellowship of the Garden of Eden is possible again.

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## **SPECIAL TOPIC: THE TEN COMMANDMENTS (cf. Exod. 20:1-17; Deut. 5:6-21)**

### **I. Terms**

- A. Literally “The Ten Words” (cf. Exod. 34:28; Deut. 4:13; 10:4).
- B. Clement of Alexandria called it “The Decalogue” (*Deka Logous*) and this was followed by the early church fathers.
- C. In the Bible it is also called:
  - 1. “Covenant” (i.e. Hebrew *berith*, Exod. 34:28; Deut. 4:13; 9:9)
    - a. from Akkadian, *barah*—to eat (i.e. a common meal)
    - b. from Akkadian, *biritu*—to bind or fetter (i.e. a bond between people)
    - c. from Akkadian, *birit*—between (i.e. arrangement between two parties)
    - d. *baru*—a taste (i.e. an obligation)
  - 2. “Testimony”—Exod. 16:34; 25:16 (i.e. the two tablets)

### **II. Purpose**

- A. They reveal the character of God
  - 1. unique and authoritative (i.e. monotheistic)
  - 2. ethical, both towards society and the individual
- B. They are for
  - 1. all people because they reveal God’s will for mankind and all humans were created in God’s image
  - 2. covenant believers only because it is impossible to understand and obey without God’s help
  - 3. C. S. Lewis—inner moral sense even among primitive tribes (Rom. 1:19-20; 2:14-15) are reflected here.
- C. As all ancient law codes they were
  - 1. to regulate and control interpersonal relationships
  - 2. maintain stability of the society
- D. They bound the heterogeneous group of slave and Egyptian outcasts into a community of faith and law. B. S. Childs, *Old Testament Library “Exodus”*  
“the eight negative aspects show the outer limits of the covenant boundary. There are no misdemeanors but to break the very fibre of which the divine-human relation consists. The two positive aspects show definition to the life within the covenant. The Decalogue looks both outward and inward; it guards against the way of death and points to the way of life” (p. 398).

### **III. Parallels**

#### **A. Biblical**

- 1. The Ten Words are recorded twice, in Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5. The slight difference in the 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 10<sup>th</sup> commandments shows the adaptability of these general principles to different situations.
- 2. However, their uniformity points toward the precision with which they were transmitted.
- 3. They were probably read and reaffirmed periodically, as Joshua 24 shows.

#### **B. Cultural**

- 1. Other law codes from the ancient near East
  - a. Ur-Nammu (Sumerian, 2050 B.C.) from the city of Ur
  - b. Lipit-Ishtar (Sumerian, 1900 B.C.) from the city of Isin
  - c. Eshnunna (Akkadian, 1875 B.C.) from the city of Eshunna
  - d. Code of Hammurabi (Babylonian, 1690 B.C.) from Babylon but Stela were found in Susa
- 2. The form of the laws in Exodus 20:18-23:37 have much in common with other ancient Near Eastern law codes. However, the Ten Words are in a unique form which implies their authority (2<sup>nd</sup> person commands—apodictic).
- 3. The most obvious cultural connection is with the Hittite Suzerainty Treaties of 1450-1200 B.C. Some good examples of this similarity can be seen in:
  - a. The Ten Words
  - b. The book of Deuteronomy
  - c. Joshua 24

The elements of these treaties are:

- a. Identification of the King
- b. Narration of his great acts
- c. Covenant obligations
- d. Instruction for depositing the treaty in the sanctuary for public reading
- e. Deities of parties invoked as witnesses
- f. Blessing for fidelity and curses for violations

2. Some good sources on this subject
  - a. George Mendenhall, *Law and Covenant in Israel and the Ancient Near East*
  - b. Dewey Beegle, *Moses, The Servant of Yahweh*
  - c. W. Bezzel, *Origin and History*
  - d. D. J. McCarthy, *Treaty and Covenant*

#### IV. Internal Structure

- A. Alt, in his book, *The Origins of Israelite Law*, was the first to make the distinction between apodictic and casuistic.
  1. Casuistic being that common form of Ancient Near Eastern Law that contained a condition—"if" —"then"
  2. Apodictic being that rare form that expresses a direct command "Thou shall. . ." or "Thou shall not. . ."
  3. Roland de Vaux in *Ancient Israel: Social Institutions*, vol. 1, p. 146, says that the casuistic is primarily used in the secular area and the apodictic in the sacred.
- B. The Ten Words are primarily negative in their expression—8 of 10. The form is second person singular. They are either meant to address the entire Covenant community, each individual member, or both!
- C. The two tables of stone (Exod. 24:12; 31:18) are often interpreted as relating to the vertical and horizontal aspects of the Ten Words. Man's relationship to YHWH is spelled out in 4 commands and man's relationship to other men in the other 6 commandments. However, in light of Hittite Suzerain treaties, they may be two copies of the entire list of commands.
- D. The historical numbering of the Ten Words
  1. It is obvious that we have ten regulations. However, the exact distinction is not given.
  2. Modern Jews list 20:2 as the first commandment. In order to keep the number at ten they make verses 3-6 the second commandment.
  3. The Roman Catholic and Lutheran churches, following Augustine, make Exod. 20:3-6 the first commandment and in order to keep the number at ten, divide verse 17 into two separate commands.
  4. Reform churches, following Origen and the early Eastern and Western churches, assert that Exod. 20:3 is the first commandment. This was the ancient Jewish view represented by Philo and Josephus.

#### V. How are Christians to Relate to the Ten Words?

- A. Jesus' high views of Scripture are recorded in the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5-7 and especially 5:17-48, which shows us the seriousness of the question. His sermon almost seems to be based on the Ten Words and their proper application.
- B. Theories of relationship
  1. For believers
    - a. Roy Honeycutt, *These Ten Words*
      - (1) "We never outgrow the Ten Commandments because we never outgrow God" (p. 7).
      - (2) "Because the Commandments are witnesses to God, however, there is a sense in which their relevance and the relevance of God are so intertwined as to be almost inseparable. Consequently, if God is so relevant for your life, the Commandments will also be deeply relevant for they are written of God's character and demands" (p. 8).
    - b. Personally, we must see these directives as issuing from a faith relation already established. To divorce them from faith and commitment to God is to destroy them. Therefore, for me, they are universal only in the sense that God wants all men to know Him. They are also related to the inner witness of God to His entire human creation. Paul expresses this in Romans 1:19-20; 2:14-15. In this sense the Commandments reflect a guiding light that has an indwelling relevance to all mankind.
  2. For all men, in all societies, for all times
    - a. Elton Trueblood, *Foundations for Reconstruction*

"The thesis of this small book is that the recovery of the moral law, as represented by the Hebrew Decalogue, is one of the ways in which an antidote to potential decline can be found" (p. 6).
    - b. George Rawlinson, *Pulpit Commentary*, "Exodus"
 

"They constitute for all time a condensed summary of human duty which bears divinity upon its face, which is suited for every form of human society, and which, so long as the world endures, cannot become antiquated. The retention of the Decalogue as the best summary of the moral law by Christian communities is justified on these grounds, and itself furnishes emphatic testimony to the excellency of the compendium" (p. 130).
  3. As a means of salvation they are not, nor ever have been, God's means for the spiritual redemption of fallen man. Paul clearly states this in Gal. 2:15-4:31 and Rom. 3:21-6:23. They do serve as guidelines for man in society. They point to God and then to our fellow man. To miss the first element is to miss all! Moral rules, without changed, indwelt hearts, are a picture of man's hopeless fallenness! The Ten Words are valid, but only as a preparation to meet God in the midst of our inability. Divorced from redemption they are guidelines without a guide!

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: THE SECOND COMING

This is literally "until the *Parousia*," which means "presence" and was used of a royal visit. The other MT terms used for the Second Coming are (1) *epiphaneia*, "face to face appearing"; (2) *apokalypis*, "unveiling"; and (3) "the Day of the Lord" and the variations of this phrase. The antecedent to "Lord" in this passage is both YHWH, as in vv. 10 and 11, and Jesus in vv. 7,8,14. This grammatical ambiguity was a common technique of NT authors to assert the deity of Jesus.

The NT as a whole is written within the world-view of the OT, which asserted

1. a current evil, rebellious age
2. a coming new age of righteousness

3. brought about by the Spirit's agency through the work of the Messiah (Anointed One)

The theological assumption of progressive revelation is required because the NT authors slightly modify Israel's expectation. Instead of a military, nationalistic-focused (Israel) coming of the Messiah, there are two comings. The first coming was the incarnation of deity in the conception and birth of Jesus of Nazareth. He came as the non-military, non-judicial "suffering servant" of Isa. 53; also the mild rider on the colt of a donkey (not a war horse or kingly mule), of Zech. 9:9. The first coming inaugurated the New Messianic Age, the Kingdom of God on earth. In one sense the Kingdom is here, but of course, in another it is still far off. It is this tension between the two comings of the Messiah which, in a sense, is the overlapping of the two Jewish ages that was unseen, or at least unclear, from the OT. In reality, this dual coming emphasizes YHWH's commitment to redeem all humanity (cf. Gen. 3:15; 12:3; Exod. 19:5 and the preaching of the prophets, especially Isaiah and Jonah).

The church is not waiting for the fulfillment of OT prophecy because most prophecies refer to the first coming (cf. *How to Read the Bible For All Its Worth*, pp. 165-166). What believers do anticipate is the glorious coming of the resurrected King of Kings and Lord of Lords, the expected historical fulfillment of the new age of righteousness on earth as it is in heaven (cf. Matt. 6:10). The OT presentations were not inaccurate, but incomplete. He will come again just as the prophets predicted in the power and authority of YHWH.

The Second Coming is not a biblical term, but the concept forms the world-view and framework of the entire NT. God will set it all straight. Fellowship between God and mankind made in His image will be restored. Evil will be judged and removed. God's purposes will not, cannot, fail!

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: GREEK TERMS FOR TESTING AND THEIR CONNOTATIONS

There are two Greek terms which have the idea of testing someone for a purpose.

### A. *Dokimazō, dokimion, dokimasia*

This term is a metallurgist term for testing the genuineness of something (metaphorically, someone) by fire. The fire reveals the true metal by burning off (purifying) of the dross. This physical process became a powerful idiom for God and/or humans testing others. This term is used only in a positive sense of testing with a view towards acceptance. It is used in the NT of testing.

1. oxen, Luke 14:19
2. ourselves, I Cor. 11:28
3. our faith, James 1:3
4. even God, Heb. 3:9

The outcomes of these tests were assumed to be positive (cf. Rom. 1:28; 14:22; 16:10; II Cor. 10:18; 13:3; Phil. 2:27; I Pet. 1:7). Therefore, the term conveys the idea of someone being examined and proved to be

1. worthwhile
2. good
3. genuine
4. valuable
5. honored

### B. *Peirazō, peirasmos*

This term has the connotation of examination of examination for the purpose of fault finding or rejection. It is often used in connection with Jesus' temptation in the wilderness.

1. It conveys the attempt to trap Jesus (cf. Matt. 4:1; 16:1; 19:3; 22:18,35; Mark 1:13; Luke 4:2; 10:25; Heb. 2:18).
2. This term (*peirazō*) is used as a title for Satan in Matt. 4:3; I Thess. 3:5.
3. It (in its compound form, *ekpeirazō*) is used by Jesus to not test God (cf. Matt. 4:7; Luke 4:12; also see I Cor. 10:9).
4. It is used in connection with the temptation and trials of believers (cf. I Cor. 7:5; 10:9,13; Gal. 6:1; I Thess. 3:5; Heb. 2:18; James 1:2,13,14; I Pet. 4:12; II Pet. 2:9).

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: TEXTUAL CRITICISM

Brief explanation of the problems and theories of "lower criticism" or "textual criticism."

### A. How the variants occurred

1. inadvertent or accidental (vast majority of occurrences)
  - a. slip of the eye
    - (1) in hand copying which reads the second instance of two similar words and thereby omits all of the words in between (homoioteleuton)
    - (2) in omitting a double letter word or phrase (haplography)
    - (3) mental error in repeating a phrase or line of a Greek text (dittography)
  - b. slip of the ear in copying by oral dictation where a misspelling occurs (itacism). Often the misspelling implies or spells a similar-sounding Greek word.
  - c. the earliest Greek texts had no chapter or verse divisions, little or no punctuation and no division between words. It is possible to divide the letters in different places forming different words.

2. intentional
  - a. changes were made to improve the grammatical form of the text copied
  - b. changes were made to bring the text into conformity with other biblical texts (harmonization of parallels)
  - c. changes were made by combining two or more variant readings into one long combined text (conflation)
  - d. changes were made to correct a perceived problem in the text (cf. Bart Ehrman, *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture*, pp. 146-50, concerning Heb. 2:9)
  - e. some additional information as to the historical setting or proper interpretation of the text was placed in the margin by one scribe but placed into the text by a second scribe (cf. John 5:4)
- B. The basic tenets of textual criticism (transcriptional probabilities)
  1. the most awkward or grammatically unusual text is probably the original because scribes tended to make the texts smoother
  2. the shortest text is probably the original because scribes tended to add additional information or phrases from parallel passages
  3. the older text is given more weight because of its historical proximity to the original, everything else being equal
  4. manuscripts that are geographically diverse usually have the original reading
  5. attempts to explain how variants could have occurred (this is considered the most important tenet by most scholars)
  6. analysis of a given biblical author's literary style, vocabulary, and theology is used to decide probable original wording

The UBS<sup>4</sup> Greek text used in most academic settings is an eclectic text pieced together from many ancient Greek manuscripts. Most scholars assume that more than 97% of the original wording of the Autographs has been achieved.

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: THANKSGIVING

### I. Introduction

#### A. This is the appropriate attitude of believers toward God:

1. This is the source of our praise to God through Christ
  - a. II Corinthians 2:14
  - b. II Corinthians 9:15
  - c. Colossians 3:17
2. This is the proper motive for ministry, I Cor. 1:4
3. This is the continual theme of heaven
  - a. Revelation 4:9
  - b. Revelation 7:12
  - c. Revelation 11:17
4. This is the continual theme of believers
  - a. Colossians 2:7
  - b. Colossians 3:17
  - c. Colossians 4:2

### II. Biblical Material

#### A. Old Testament

1. Two basic words:
  - a. *yadah*, which means praise
  - b. *todah*, which means thanksgiving. It is usually used of sacrifices offered (cf. II Chr. 29:31; 33:16)
2. David appointed special Levites to praise and thank God. This was continued by Solomon, Hezekiah, and Nehemiah:
  - a. I Chronicles 16:4,7,41
  - b. I Chronicles 23:30
  - c. I Chronicles 25:3
  - d. II Chronicles 5:13
  - e. II Chronicles 7:6
  - f. II Chronicles 31:2
  - g. Nehemiah 11:12
  - h. Nehemiah 12:24,27,31,38,46
3. The Psalter is the collection of the praises and thanksgivings of Israel:
  - a. Thanksgiving to YHWH for His faithfulness to the Covenant
    - (1) Psalm 107:8 [for *hesed*]
    - (2) Psalm 103:1ff
    - (3) Psalm 138:2 [for *hesed*]
  - b. Thanksgiving was part of the processional to the Temple
    - (1) Psalm 95:2
    - (2) Psalm 100:4
  - c. Thanksgiving accompanied sacrifices
    - (1) Psalm 26:7

(2) Psalm 122:4

d. Thanksgiving given for the actions of YHWH

(1) Deliverance from enemies

- (a) Psalm 7:17
- (b) Psalm 18:49
- (c) Psalm 28:7
- (d) Psalm 35:18
- (e) Psalm 44:8
- (f) Psalm 54:6
- (g) Psalm 79:13
- (h) Psalm 118:1,21,29
- (i) Psalm 138:1

(2) Deliverance from prison (metaphor), Psalm 142:7

(3) Deliverance from death

- (a) Psalm 30:4,12
- (b) Psalm 86:12-13
- (c) Isaiah 38:18-19

(4) He puts down the wicked and exalts the righteous

- (a) Psalm 52:9
- (b) Psalm 75:1
- (c) Psalm 92:1
- (d) Psalm 140:13

(5) He forgives

- (a) Psalm 30:4
- (b) Isaiah 12:1

(6) He provides for His people

- (a) Psalm 106:1ff
- (b) Psalm 111:1
- (c) Psalm 136:1,26
- (d) Psalm 145:10
- (e) Jeremiah 33:11

B. New Testament

1. The major word used for thanks and thanksgiving (some references)

- a. *eucharisteō* (cf. I Cor. 1:4,14; 10:30; 11:24; 14:17,18; Col. 1:3,12; 3:17)
- b. *eucharistos* (cf. Col. 3:15)
- c. *eucharistia* (cf. I Cor. 14:16; II Cor. 4:15; 9:11,12; Col. 2:7; 4:2)
- d. *charis* (cf. I Cor. 15:57; II Cor. 2:14; 8:16; 9:15; I Pet. 2:19)

2. The example of Jesus

- a. He was thankful for food:
  - (1) Luke 22:17,19 ( I Cor. 11:24)
  - (2) John 6:11,23
- b. He was thankful for answered prayer, John 11:41

3. Other examples of thankfulness

- a. For God's gift of Christ, II Cor. 9:15
- b. For food
  - (1) Acts 27:35
  - (2) Romans 14:6
  - (3) I Corinthians 10:30; 11:24
  - (4) I Timothy 4:3-4
- c. For healing, Luke 17:16
- d. For peace, Acts 24:2-3
- e. For deliverance from danger
  - (1) Acts 27:35
  - (2) Acts 28:15
- f. For all circumstances, Philippians 4:6
- g. For all humans, especially leaders, I Timothy 2:1

4. Other aspects of thankfulness

- a. It is God's will for all believers, I Thessalonians 5:18
- b. It is an evidence of the Spirit-filled life, Ephesians 5:20
- c. To neglect it is sin
  - (1) Luke 17:16
  - (2) Romans 1:21
- d. It is an antidote for sin, Ephesians 5:4

## 5. Paul's thankfulness

### a. His blessings on the church

- (1) for proclaiming the gospel
  - (a) Romans 1:8
  - (b) Colossians 1:3-4
  - (c) Ephesians 1:15-16
  - (d) I Thessalonians 1:2
- (2) for grace bestowed
  - (a) I Corinthians 1:4
  - (b) II Corinthians 1:11; 4:15
- (3) for accepting the gospel, I Thessalonians 2:13
- (4) for fellowship in the spread of the gospel, Philipians 1:3-5
- (5) for growth in grace, II Thessalonians 1:3
- (6) for knowledge of election, II Thessalonians 2:13
- (7) for spiritual blessings, Colossians 1:12; 3:15
- (8) for liberality in giving, II Corinthians 9:11-12
- (9) for joy over new believers, I Thessalonians 3:9

### b. His personal thanksgiving

- (1) for being a believer, Colossians 1:12
- (2) for deliverance from bondage to sin, Romans 7:25; II Cor. 2:14
- (3) for the sacrificial labor of other believers, Romans 16:4; II Cor. 8:16
- (4) for some acts not occurring, I Corinthians 1:14
- (5) for personal spiritual gift, I Corinthians 14:18
- (6) for the spiritual growth of friends, Philemon 4-5
- (7) for the physical strength for ministry, I Timothy 1:12

## III. Conclusion

- A. Thanksgiving is our central response to God once we are saved. It issues not only in verbal assent, but lifestyle gratitude.
- B. Thanksgiving in all things is the goal of a mature life in the care of God ( cf. I Thess. 5:13-18)
- C. Thanksgiving is a recurrent theme of both Old and New Testaments. Is it a theme of yours?

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: TIMOTHY

- A. His name means "one who honors God."
- B. He was the child of a Jewish mother and a Greek father and lived in Lystra (cf. Acts 16:1). The Latin translation of Origen's commentary on Rom. 16:21 says Timothy was a citizen of Derbe. This is possibly from Acts 20:4.
- C. He was instructed in the Jewish faith (or Christian faith) by his mother and grandmother (cf. II Tim. 1:5; 3:14-15).
- D. He apparently trusted Christ during Paul's first missionary journey (cf. Acts 14:6-7).
- E. He was asked to join Paul and Silas' missionary team on the second journey (cf. Acts 16:1-5), apparently to take John Mark's duties. He was confirmed by prophecy (cf. I Tim. 1:18; 4:14).
- F. He was circumcised by Paul in order to work with both Jews and Greeks (cf. Acts 16:3).
- G. He was a dedicated companion of Paul and became his Apostolic delegate. He is mentioned by name more than any other of Paul's helpers (17 times in 10 letters, cf. Rom. 16:21; I Cor. 4:17; 16:10; Phil. 1:1; 2:19,22; Col. 1:5; I Tim. 1:2; II Tim. 1:2; Titus 1:4).
- H. Paul affectionately calls him "my true child in the faith" (cf. I Tim. 1:2); "my beloved son" (cf. II Tim. 1:2); "my true child in a common faith" (cf. Titus 1:4). Also notice "my beloved and faithful child in the Lord" in I Cor. 4:17.
- I. He was apparently in Rome when Paul was released from prison and accompanied him on his fourth missionary journey (cf. Col. 1:1; Philemon 1).
- J. He is called an "apostle" in I Thess. 2:6 in the sense of an ongoing spiritual gift for the churches (cf. Eph. 4:11).
- K. Two of the three Pastoral Letters are addressed to him.
- L. He is last mentioned in Heb. 13:23 (but chronologically in II Tim. 1:2).

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: TITHING

Luke 11:42 is the only NT reference to tithing. I do not believe the NT teaches tithing because this entire setting is against "nit-picking" Jewish legalism and self-righteousness. I believe the NT guidelines for regular giving (if there are any) are found in II Cor. 8 and 9, which go far beyond tithing! If a Jew with only the information of the OT was commanded to give ten to thirty percent (there are two, possibly three, required tithes in the OT), then Christians should give far beyond and not even take the time to discuss the tithe!



NT believers must be careful of turning Christianity into a new legal performance oriented code (Christian Talmud). Their desire to be pleasing to God causes them to try to find guidelines for every area of life. However, theologically it is dangerous to pull old covenant rules which are not reaffirmed in the NT (cf. Acts 15) and make them dogmatic criteria especially when they are claimed (by modern preachers) to be causes of calamity or promises of prosperity (cf. Mal. 3).

Here is a good quote from Frank Stagg, *New Testament Theology*, pp. 292-293

“The New Testament does not once introduce tithing into the grace of giving. Tithes are mentioned only three times in the New Testament: (1) in censoring the Pharisees for neglect of justice, mercy, and faith while giving meticulous care to the tithing of even garden produce (Matt. 23:23; Luke 11:42); (2) in the exposure of the proud Pharisee who ‘prayed to himself,’ boasting that he fasted twice each week and tithed all his possessions (Luke 18:12); and (3) in arguing for the superiority of Melchizedek, and hence of Christ, to Levi (Heb. 7:6-9).

It is clear that Jesus approved tithing as a part of the Temple system, just as in principle and practice he supported the general practices of the Temple and the synagogues. But there is no indication that he imposed any part of the Temple cultus on his followers. Tithes were chiefly produce, formerly eaten at the sanctuary by the one tithing and later eaten by the priests. Tithing as

set forth in the Old Testament could be carried out only in a religious system built around a system of animal sacrifice.

Many Christians find the tithe to be a fair and workable plan for giving. So long as it is not made to be a coercive or legalistic system, it may prove to be a happy plan. However, one may not validly claim that tithing is taught in the New Testament. It is recognized as proper for Jewish observance (Matt. 23:23; Luke 11:42), but it is not imposed upon Christians. In fact, it is now impossible for Jews or Christians to tithe in the Old Testament sense. Tithing today only faintly resembles the ancient ritual practice belonging to the sacrificial system of the Jews.

Paul Stagg has summed it up:

‘While much may be said for adopting the tithe voluntarily as a standard for one’s giving without rigidly imposing it upon others as a Christian requirement, it is clear in adopting such a practice that one is not carrying on the Old Testament practice. At most one is doing something only remotely analogous to the tithing practice of the Old Testament, which was a tax to support the Temple and the priestly system, a social and religious system which no longer exists. Tithes were obligatory in Judaism as a tax until the destruction of the Temple in A.D. 70, but they are not thus binding upon Christians.’<sup>18</sup>

This is not to discredit tithing, but it is to clarify its relationship to the New Testament. It is to deny that the New Testament supports the coerciveness, legalism, profit motive, and the bargaining which so often characterize the tithing appeals today. As a voluntary system, tithing offers much; but it must be redeemed by grace if it is to be Christian. To plead that ‘it works’ is only to adopt the pragmatic tests of the world. Much ‘works’ that is not Christian. Tithing, if it is to be congenial to New Testament theology, must be rooted in the grace and love of God.”

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: TITUS

- A. Titus was one of Paul’s most trusted co-workers. This is evidenced by the fact that Paul sent him to the trouble spots of Corinth and Crete.
- B. He was a full Gentile (Timothy was only half-Greek), converted under Paul’s preaching. Paul refused to circumcise him (cf. Gal. 2).
- C. He is mentioned often in Paul’s letters (cf. II Cor. 2:13; 7:6-15; 8:6-24; 12:18; Gal. 2:1-3; II Tim. 4:10) and it is very surprising that Luke does not mention him in Acts. Some commentaries theorize that (1) he may have been a relative of Luke (possibly a brother) and to include his name would have been seen as an act of cultural impropriety on Luke’s part or (2) Titus is Luke’s major source of information about Paul’s life and ministry and, therefore, like Luke, would not be named.
- D. He accompanied Paul and Barnabas to the all important Jerusalem Council, recorded in Acts 15.
- E. The book of Titus focuses on advice Paul gives Titus about his work on Crete. Titus is acting as Paul’s official surrogate.
- F. The last information in the NT about Titus is that he was sent to work in Dalmatia (cf. II Tim. 4:10).

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: TRIBULATION

There needs to be a theological distinction between Paul’s use of this term (*thlipsis*) and John’s:

- A. Paul’s usage (which reflects Jesus’ usage)
  - 1. problems, sufferings, evil involved in a fallen world
    - a. Matt. 13:21
    - b. Rom. 5:3
    - c. I Cor. 7:28
    - d. II Cor. 7:4
    - e. Eph. 3:13
  - 2. problems, sufferings, evil caused by unbelievers
    - a. Rom. 5:3; 8:35; 12:12
    - b. II Cor. 1:4,8; 6:4; 7:4; 8:2,13
    - c. Eph. 3:13
    - d. Phil. 4:14
    - e. I Thess. 1:6

- f. II Thess. 1:4
- 3. problems, sufferings, evil of the end-time
  - a. Matt. 24:21,29
  - b. Mark 13:19,24
  - c. II Thess. 1:6
- B. John's usage
  - 1. John makes a specific distinction between *thlipsis* and *orgē* or *thumos* (wrath) in Revelation. *Thlipsis* is what unbelievers do to believers and *orgē* is what God does to unbelievers
    - a. *thlipsis* - Rev. 1:9; 2:9-10,22; 7:14
    - b. *orgē* - Rev. 6:16-17; 11:18; 16:19; 19:15
    - c. *thumos* - Rev. 12:12; 14:8,10,19; 15:2,7; 16:1; 18:3
  - 2. John also uses the term in his Gospel to reflect problems believers face in every age - John 16:33.

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: THE TRINITY

Notice the activity of all three Persons of the Trinity. The term "trinity," first coined by Tertullian, is not a biblical word, but the concept is pervasive.

- 1. the Gospels
    - a. Matthew 3:16-17; 28:19 (and parallels)
    - b. John 14:26
  - 2. Acts - Acts 2:32-33, 38-39
  - 3. Paul
    - a. Romans 1:4-5; 5:1,5; 8:1-4,8-10
    - b. I Corinthians 2:8-10; 12:4-6
    - c. II Corinthians 1:21; 13:14
    - d. Galatians 4:4-6
    - e. Ephesians 1:3-14,17; 2:18; 3:14-17; 4:4-6
    - f. I Thessalonians 1:2-5
    - g. II Thessalonians 2:13
    - h. Titus 3:4-6
  - 4. Peter - I Peter 1:2
  - 5. Jude - vv. 20-21
- It is hinted at in the OT
- 1. Use of plurals for God
    - a. Name *Elohim* is plural, but when used of God always has a singular verb
    - b. "Us" in Genesis 1:26-27; 3:22; 11:7
    - c. "One" in the *Shema* of Deuteronomy 6:4 is plural (as it is in Gen. 2:24; Ezek. 37:17)
  - 2. The angel of the Lord as a visible representative of deity
    - a. Genesis 16:7-13; 22:11-15; 31:11,13; 48:15-16
    - b. Exodus 3:2,4; 13:21; 14:19
    - c. Judges 2:1; 6:22-23; 13:3-22
    - d. Zechariah 3:1-2
  - 3. God and Spirit are separate, Genesis 1:1-2; Psalm 104:30; Isa. 63:9-11; Ezek. 37:13-14
  - 4. God (YHWH) and Messiah (*Adon*) are separate, Psalm 45:6-7; 110:1; Zechariah 2:8-11; 10:9-12
  - 5. Messiah and Spirit are separate, Zechariah 12:10
  - 6. All three mentioned in Isa. 48:16; 61:1

The deity of Jesus and the personality of the Spirit caused problems for the strict, monotheistic, early believers:

- 1. Tertullian - subordinated the Son to the Father
- 2. Origen - subordinated the divine essence of the Son and the Spirit
- 3. Arius - denied deity to the Son and Spirit
- 4. Monarchianism - believed in a successive manifestation of God

The trinity is a historically developed formulation informed by the biblical material

- 1. The full deity of Jesus, equal to the Father, affirmed in A.D. 325 by the Council of Nicea
- 2. The full personality and deity of the Spirit equal to the Father and Son was affirmed by the Council of Constantinople (A.D. 381)
- 3. The doctrine of the trinity is fully expressed in Augustine's work *De Trinitate*

There is truly mystery here. But the NT seems to affirm one divine essence with three eternal personal manifestations.

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: “TRUE” IN JOHN’S WRITINGS

1. God the Father
  - a. God is true/trustworthy (cf. John 3:33; 7:18,28; 8:26; 17:3; Rom. 3:4; I Thess. 1:9; I John 5:20; Rev. 6:10)
  - b. God’s ways are true (cf. Rev. 15:3)
  - c. God’s judgments are true (cf. Rev. 16:7; 19:2)
  - d. God’s sayings are true (cf. Rev. 19:11)
2. God the Son
  - a. the Son is true/truth
    - 1) true light (cf. John 1:9; I John 2:8)
    - 2) true vine (cf. John 15:1)
    - 3) full of grace and truth (cf. John 1:14,17)
    - 4) He is truth (cf. John 14:6; 8:32)
    - 5) He is true (cf. Rev. 3:7,14; 19:11)
  - b. the Son’s testimony/witness is true (cf. John 18:37)
3. It can have a comparative sense
  - a. the law of Moses versus Jesus’ grace and truth (cf. John 1:17)
  - b. the tabernacle in the wilderness versus the heavenly tabernacle (cf. Heb. 8:2; 9:1)
4. As so often in John this word had several connotations (Hebraic and Greek). John uses them all to describe the Father and the Son, as persons, as speakers, and as their message which is to be passed on to their followers (cf. John 4:13; 19:35; Heb. 10:22; Rev. 22:6).
5. For John these two adjectives describe the Father as the one and only trustworthy deity (cf. 5:44; I John 5:20) and Jesus as His true and complete revelation for the purpose of redemptive, not just cognitive, facts!

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: FAITH (*PISTIS* [noun], *PISTEUŌ*, [verb], *PISTOS* [adjective])<sup>2</sup>

- A. This is such an important term in the Bible (cf. Heb. 11:1,6). It is the subject of Jesus’ early preaching (cf. Mark 1:15). There are at least two new covenant requirements: repentance and faith (cf. 1:15; Acts 3:16,19; 20:21).
- B. Its etymology
  1. The term “faith” in the OT meant loyalty, fidelity, or trustworthiness and was a description of God’s nature, not ours.
  2. It came from a Hebrew term (*emun*, *emunah*) which meant “to be sure or stable.” Saving faith is mental assent (set of truths), moral living (a lifestyle), and primarily a relational (welcoming of a person) and volitional commitment (a decision) to that person.
- C. Its OT usage

It must be emphasized that Abraham’s faith was not in a future Messiah, but in God’s promise that he would have a child and descendants (cf. Gen. 12:2; 15:2-5; 17:4-8; 18:14). Abraham responded to this promise by trusting in God. He still had doubts and problems about this promise, which took thirteen years to be fulfilled. His imperfect faith, however, was accepted by God. God is willing to work with flawed human beings who respond to Him and His promises in faith, even if it is the size of a mustard seed (cf. Matt. 17:20).
- D. Its NT usage

The term “believed” is from the Greek term (*pisteuō*) which can also be translated “believe,” “faith,” or “trust.” For example, the noun does not occur in the Gospel of John, but the verb is used often. In John 2:23-25 there is uncertainty as to the genuineness of the crowd’s commitment to Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah. Other examples of this superficial use of the term “believe” are in John 8:31-59 and Acts 8:13, 18-24. True biblical faith is more than an initial response. It must be followed by a process of discipleship (cf. Matt. 13:20-22,31-32).
- E. Its use with PREPOSITIONS
  1. *eis* means “into.” This unique construction emphasizes believers putting their trust/faith in Jesus
    - a. into His name (John 1:12; 2:23; 3:18; I John 5:13)
    - b. into Him (John 2:11; 3:15,18; 4:39; 6:40; 7:5,31,39,48; 8:30; 9:36; 10:42; 11:45,48; 17:37,42; Matt. 18:6; Acts 10:43; Phil. 1:29; I Pet. 1:8)
    - c. into Me (John 6:35; 7:38; 11:25,26; 12:44,46; 14:1,12; 16:9; 17:20)
    - d. into the Son (John 3:36; 9:35; I John 5:10)
    - e. into Jesus (John 12:11; Acts 19:4; Gal. 2:16)
    - f. into Light (John 12:36)
    - g. into God (John 14:1)
  2. *en* means “in” as in John 3:15; Mark 1:15; Acts 5:14
  3. *epi* means “in” or upon, as in Matt. 27:42; Acts 9:42; 11:17; 16:31; 22:19; Rom. 4:5,24; 9:33; 10:11; I Tim. 1:16; I Pet. 2:6
  4. the DATIVE CASE with no PREPOSITION as in Gal. 3:6; Acts 18:8; 27:25; I John 3:23; 5:10
  5. *hoti*, which means “believe that,” gives content as to what to believe
    - a. Jesus is the Holy One of God (John 6:69)
    - b. Jesus is the I Am (John 8:24)
    - c. Jesus is in the Father and the Father is in Him (John 10:38)
    - d. Jesus is the Messiah (John 11:27; 20:31)

- e. Jesus is the Son of God (John 11:27; 20:31)
- f. Jesus was sent by the Father (John 11:42; 17:8,21)
- g. Jesus is one with the Father (John 14:10-11)
- h. Jesus came from the Father (John 16:27,30)
- i. Jesus identified Himself in the covenant name of the Father, "I Am" (John 8:24; 13:19)
- j. We will live with Him (Rom. 6:8)
- k. Jesus died and rose again (I Thess. 4:14)

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: "TRUTH" IN JOHN

In a sense John combines the Hebrew background and Greek background of *alētheia* "truth" as he did *logos* (cf. 1:1-14). In Hebrew *emeth* denotes that which is true, or trustworthy (often associated in the Septuagint with *pisteuō*). In Greek it was associated with Plato's reality versus unreality, heavenly versus earthly. This fits the dualism of John. God has clearly revealed (the etymology of *alētheia* is to expose, unconceal, clearly manifest) Himself in His Son. This is expressed in several ways:

1. noun, *alētheia*, truth
  - a. Jesus is full of grace and truth (cf. 1:14,17 - OT covenant terms)
  - b. Jesus is the focus of John the Baptist's witness (cf. 4:33; 18:37 - last OT prophet)
  - c. Jesus speaks the truth (cf. 8:4,44,45,46 - revelation is propositional and personal)
  - d. Jesus (the *Logos*, 1:1-3) is truth (cf. 17:17)
2. adjective, *alēthēs*, true, trustworthy
  - a. Jesus' witness (cf. 5:31-32; 7:18; 8:13-14)
  - b. Jesus' judgment (cf. 8:16)
3. adjective, *alēthinus*, real
  - a. Jesus is the true light (cf. 1:9)
  - b. Jesus is the true bread (cf. 6:32)
  - c. Jesus is the true vine (cf. 15:1)
  - d. Jesus is the true witness (cf. 19:35)
4. adverb, *alēthōs*, truly
  - a. Samaritan witness to Jesus as Savior of the world (cf. 4:42)
  - b. Jesus is true food and drink, as opposed to the manna of Moses' day (cf. 6:55)

The term truth and its derivatives also express others' testimony to Jesus, *alēthēs*

- a. John the Baptist's testimony is true (cf. 10:41)
- b. testimony of one of the soldiers at the crucifixion is true (cf. 19:35)
- c. John's (the author of the Gospel) testimony is true (cf. 21:24)
- d. Jesus seen as true prophet (cf. 6:14; 7:40)

For a good discussion of truth in the OT and NT see George E. Ladd's *A Theology of the New Testament*, pp. 263-269.

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: "TRUTH" IN PAUL'S WRITINGS

Paul's usage of this term and its related forms comes from its OT equivalent, *emet*, which is trustworthy or faithful. In interbiblical Jewish writings it was used of truth in contrast to falsehood. Maybe the closest parallel would be the Dead Sea Scrolls' "Thanksgiving Hymns," where it is used of revealed doctrines. The members of the Essene Community became "witnesses of truth."

Paul uses the term as a way of referring to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

- A. Romans 1:18,25; 2:8,20; 3:7; 15:8
- B. I Corinthians 13:6
- C. II Corinthians 4:2; 6:7; 11:10; 13:8
- D. Galatians 2:5,14; 5:7
- E. Ephesians 1:13; 6:14
- F. Colossians 1:5,6
- G. II Thessalonians 2:10,12,13
- H. I Timothy 2:4; 3:15; 4:3; 6:5
- I. II Timothy 2:15,18,25; 3:7,8; 4:4
- J. Titus 1:1,14

Paul also uses the term as a way of expressing his speaking accurately

- A. Acts 26:25

- B. Romans 9:1
- C. II Corinthians 7:14; 12:6
- D. Ephesians 4:25
- E. Philippians 1:18
- F. I Timothy 2:7

He also uses it to describe his motives in I Cor. 5:8 and lifestyle (also for all Christians) in Eph. 4:24; 5:9; Phil. 4:8. He sometimes uses it for people:

- A. God, Rom. 3:4 (cf. John 3:33; 17:17)
- B. Jesus, Eph. 4:21 (similar to John 14:6)
- C. Apostolic witnesses, Titus 1:13
- D. Paul, II Cor. 6:8

Only Paul uses the verb form (i.e. *alētheuō*) in Gal. 4:16 and Eph. 4:15, where it refers to the gospel. For further study consult Colin Brown (ed), *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, vol. 3, pp. 784-902.

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: TYPOLOGY

Philo and the early church's use of allegory and Paul's use of the same technique differed significantly. The former totally ignored the historical setting, developing teachings entirely foreign to the original author's intent. Paul's approach is better characterized as typology. Paul assumed the historical setting of Genesis and the unity of the Old and New Covenants, thus he was able to build on the similarities between them because they have one author—God. In this particular context, Paul compared the Abrahamic Covenant and the Mosaic Covenant and draws application to the New Covenant of Jer. 31:31-34 and the NT.

Four connections in 4:21-31 may be drawn: (1) the two mothers stand for two families; one formed by natural means, the other by supernatural promise; (2) there was tension between these two mothers and their children as there was tension between the Judaizer's message and Paul's gospel; (3) both groups claimed to be descendants of Abraham, but one was in bondage to the Mosaic Law and the other was free in Christ's finished work; (4) two mountains were connected to these different covenants, Mt. Sinai with Moses and Mt. Zion with Abraham. Mt. Zion or Mt. Moriah was where Abraham offered Isaac as a sacrifice (cf. Gen. 22), which later became Jerusalem. Abraham was looking for a heavenly city (Heb. 11:10; 12:22; 13:14, New Jerusalem, Isa. 40-66) not an earthly Jerusalem.

Paul may have used this typology because: (1) the false teachers had used this same approach to their advantage claiming to be the true seed of Abraham; (2) the false teachers may have used an allegory from Moses' writings to push their Jewish covenant theology so Paul uses the father of the Jewish faith, Abraham; (3) Paul may have used it because of Gen. 21:9-10, which is quoted in verse 30 and says, "drive off" the natural son; in Paul's analogy this would refer to the Judaizers; (4) Paul may have used it because of the exclusivism of the Jewish false teachers, particularly in their contempt for the Gentiles; in Paul's typology the Gentiles are accepted and the racially confident ones are rejected by God (cf. Matt. 8:11-12); or (5) Paul may have used this typology because he has been emphasizing "sonship" and "heirship" in chapters 3 & 4. This was the heart of his argument: our adoption into the family of God by faith through Christ alone, not natural descent.

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: THE NUMBER TWELVE

Twelve has always been a symbolic number of organization

- A. Outside the Bible
  - 1. twelve signs of the Zodiac
  - 2. twelve months of the year
- B. In the OT
  - 1. the sons of Jacob (the Jewish tribes)
  - 2. reflected in
    - a. twelve pillars of the altar in Exod. 24:4
    - b. twelve jewels on the high priest's breastplate (which stand for the tribes) in Exod. 28:21
    - c. twelve loaves of bread in the holy place of the tabernacle in Lev. 24:5
    - d. twelve spies sent into Canaan in Num. 13 (one from each tribe)
    - e. twelve rods (tribal standards) at Korah's rebellion in Num. 17:2
    - f. twelve stones of Joshua in Josh. 4:3,9,20
    - g. twelve administrative districts in Solomon's administration in I Kgs. 4:7
    - h. twelve stones of Elijah's altar to YHWH in I Kgs. 18:31
- C. In the NT
  - 1. twelve apostles chosen
  - 2. twelve baskets of bread (one for each Apostle) in Matt. 14:20
  - 3. twelve thrones on which NT disciples sit (referring to the 12 tribes of Israel) in Matt. 19:28

4. twelve legions of angels to rescue Jesus in Matt. 26:53
5. the symbolism of Revelation
  - a. 24 elders on 24 thrones in 4:4
  - b. 144,000 (12x12) in 7:4; 14:1,3
  - c. twelve stars on the woman's crown in 12:1
  - d. twelve gates, twelve angels reflecting the twelve tribes in 21:12
  - e. twelve foundation stones of the new Jerusalem and on them the names of the twelve Apostles in 21:14
  - g. twelve thousand stadia in 21:16 (size of new city, New Jerusalem)
  - h. wall is 144 cubits in 21:7
  - i. twelve gates of pearl in 21:21
  - k. trees in new Jerusalem with twelve kinds of fruit (one for each month ) in 22:2

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: EXEGETICAL PROCEDURES FOR INTERPRETING “THE UNPARDONABLE SIN”

- A. Remember that the Gospels reflect a Jewish setting
  1. Two kinds of sins (cf. Lev. 4:2,22,27; 5:15,17-19; Num. 15:27-31; Deut. 1:43; 17:12-13)
    - a. unintentional
    - b. intentional
  2. Pre-Pentecostal Jewish setting (i.e. the fulfillment of the gospel and the Spirit have not yet been manifested)
- B. Note the literary context
  1. The unbelief of Jesus' own family (cf. 3:31-32)
  2. The unbelief of the Pharisees (cf. 2:24; 3:1,6,22)
- C. Compare parallels where the title “Son of Man” changes to “sons of men”
  1. Matt. 12:22-37 (i.e. 12:32, “a word against the Son of Man”)
  2. Luke 11:14-26; 12:8-12 (i.e. 12:10, “a word against the Son of Man”)
  3. Mark 3:28 (i.e. “All sins shall be forgiven the sons of men”)

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: VICES AND VIRTUES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Lists of both vices and virtues are common in the NT. Often they reflect both rabbinical and cultural (Hellenistic) lists. The NT lists of contrasting characteristics can be seen in

	<u>Vices</u>	<u>Virtues</u>
1. Paul	Rom. 1:28-32	---
	Rom. 13:13	Rom. 2:9-21
	I Cor. 5:9-11	---
	6:10	I Cor. 6:6-9
	II Cor. 12:20	II Cor. 6:4-10
	Gal. 5:19-21	Gal. 5:22-23
	Eph. 4:25-32	---
	5:3-5	---
	---	Phil. 4:8-9
	Col. 3:5,8	Col. 3:12-14
	I Tim. 1:9-10	---
	6:4-5	---
	II Tim. 2:22a,23	II Tim. 2:22b,24
	Titus 1:7, 3:3	Titus 1:8-9; 3:1-2
2. James	James 3:15-16	James 3:17-18
3. Peter	I Pet. 4:3	I Pet. 4:7-11
	II Pet. 1:9	II Pet. 1:5-8
4. John	Rev. 21:8;	---
	22:15	---

## SPECIAL TOPIC: WEAKNESS

Here is the contrast. The false teachers boast in their credentials and rhetorical style, but Paul knows the value of “weakness” (*astheneō*). Notice

how often these terms (or their various forms) are used in I and II Corinthians.

<b>Boast</b>	<b>Weak</b>
I Corinthians 1:29,31	I Corinthians 1:25,27
3:21	2:3
4:7	4:10
5:6	8:7,9,10,11,12
9:15,16	9:22
II Corinthians 1:12,14	11:30
5:12 (twice)	12:22
7:4,14 (twice)	15:43
8:24	II Corinthians 10:10
9:2,3	11:21,29,30
10:8,13,15,16,17	12:5,9,10 (twice)
11:12,16,17,18,30	13:3,4 (twice), 9
12:1,5,6,9	

Paul uses the concept of weakness in several different ways.

1. weakness of God, I Cor. 1:25
2. weak in the world, I Cor. 1:27
3. Paul's weakness and fear, I Cor. 2:3; 9:22; II Cor. 11:29,30; 12:5
4. Paul and his mission team, I Cor. 4:10; II Cor. 11:21
5. weak believer (cf. Rom. 14:1-15:13), I Cor. 8:7,9,10,11,12; 9:22
6. physical illness, I Cor. 11:30
7. parts of the human body, I Cor. 12:22
8. physical body, I Cor. 15:43
9. Paul's physical presence or his rhetorical skills, II Cor. 10:10
10. Paul's weakness amplified God's strength, II Cor. 12:9,10; 13:4,9
11. Christ's message through Paul, II Cor.13:3
12. Christ's physical body, II Cor. 13:4

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: WEALTH

- I. Perspective of the Old Testament as a whole
  - A. God is the owner of all things
    1. Genesis 1-2
    2. I Chronicles 29:11
    3. Psalm 24:1; 50:12; 89:11
    4. Isaiah 66:2
  - B. Humans are stewards of wealth for God's purposes
    1. Deuteronomy 8:11-20
    2. Leviticus 19:9-18
    3. Job 31:16-33
    4. Isaiah 58:6-10
  - C. Wealth is a part of worship
    1. the two tithes
      - a. Numbers 18:21-29; Deut. 12:6-7; 14:22-27
      - b. Deut. 14:28-29; 26:12-15
    2. Proverbs 3:9
  - D. Wealth is seen as a gift from God for Covenant fidelity
    1. Deuteronomy 27-28
    2. Proverbs 3:10; 8:20-21; 10:22; 15:6
  - E. Warning against wealth at the expense of others
    1. Proverbs 21:6
    2. Jeremiah 5:26-29
    3. Hosea 12:6-8
    4. Micah 6:9-12
  - F. Wealth is not sinful in itself unless it is priority
    1. Psalm 52:7; 62:10; 73:3-9
    2. Proverbs 11:28; 23:4-5; 27:24; 28:20-22



3. Job 31:24-28

II. Unique perspective of Proverbs

A. Wealth placed in arena of personal effort

1. slothfulness and laziness condemned—Proverbs 6:6-11; 10:4-5,26; 12:24,27; 13:4; 15:19; 18:9; 19:15,24; 20:4,13; 21:25; 22:13; 24:30-34; 26:13-16

2. hard work advocated—Proverbs 12:11,14; 13:11

B. Poverty versus riches used to illustrate righteousness versus wickedness—Proverbs 10:1ff; 11:27-28; 13:7; 15:16-17; 28:6,19-20

C. Wisdom (knowing God and His Word and living this knowledge) is better than riches—Proverbs 3:13-15; 8:9-11,18-21; 13:18

D. Warnings and admonitions

1. warnings

a. beware of guarantying a neighbor's loan (surety)—Proverbs 6:1-5; 11:15; 17:18; 20:16; 22:26-27; 27:13

b. beware of getting rich through evil means—Proverbs 1:19; 10:2,15; 11:1; 13:11; 16:11; 20:10,23; 21:6; 22:16,22; 28:8

c. beware of borrowing—Proverbs 22:7

d. beware of fleetingness of wealth—Proverbs 23:4-5

e. wealth will not help on judgment day—Proverbs 11:4

f. wealth has many "friends"—Proverbs 14:20; 19:4

2. admonitions

a. generosity advocated—Proverbs 11:24-26; 14:31; 17:5; 19:17; 22:9,22-23; 23:10-11; 28:27

b. righteousness better than wealth—Proverbs 16:8; 28:6,8,20-22

c. prayer for need, not abundance—Proverbs 30:7-9

d. giving to the poor is giving to God—Proverbs 14:31

III. Perspective of the New Testament

A. Jesus

1. wealth forms a unique temptation to trust in ourselves and our resources instead of God and His resources

a. Matthew 6:24; 13:22; 19:23

b. Mark 10:23-31

c. Luke 12:15-21,33-34

d. Revelation 3:17-19

2. God will provide our physical needs

a. Matthew 6:19-34

b. Luke 12:29-32

3. sowing is related to reaping (spiritual as well as physical)

a. Mark 4:24

b. Luke 6:36-38

c. Matthew 6:14; 18:35

4. repentance affects wealth

a. Luke 19:2-10

b. Leviticus 5:16

5. economic exploitation condemned

a. Matthew 23:25

b. Mark 12:38-40

6. end-time judgment is related to our use of wealth—Matthew 25:31-46

B. Paul

1. practical view like Proverbs (work)

a. Ephesians 4:28

b. I Thessalonians 4:11-12

c. II Thessalonians 3:8,11-12

d. I Timothy 5:8

2. spiritual view like Jesus (things are fleeting, be content)

a. I Timothy 6:6-10 (contentment)

b. Philippians 4:11-12 (contentment)

c. Hebrews 13:5 (contentment)

d. I Timothy 6:17-19 (generosity and trust in God, not riches)

e. I Corinthians 7:30-31 (transformation of things)

IV. Conclusions

A. There is no systematic biblical theology concerning wealth.

B. There is no definitive passage on this subject therefore, insights must be gleaned from different passages. Take care not to read your views into these isolated texts.

C. Proverbs, which was written by the wise men (sages), has a different perspective than other types of biblical genre. Proverbs is practical and individually focused. It balances and must be balanced by other Scripture (cf. Jer. 18:18).

D. Our day needs to analyze its views and practices concerning wealth in light of the bible. Our priorities are misplaced if capitalism or communism is our only guide. Why and how one succeeds are more important questions than how much one has accumulated.

E. Accumulation of wealth must be balanced with true worship and responsible stewardship (cf. II Cor. 8-9).

## SPECIAL TOPIC: WINE AND STRONG DRINK

### I. Biblical Terms

#### A. Old Testament

1. *Yayin* - This is the general term for wine, which is used 141 times. The etymology is uncertain because it is not from a Hebrew root. It always means fermented fruit juice, usually grape. Some typical passages are Gen. 9:21; Exod. 29:40; Num. 15:5,10.
2. *Tirosh* - This is “new wine.” Because of climatic conditions of the Near East, fermentation started as soon as six hours after extracting the juice. This term refers to wine in the process of fermenting. For some typical passages, see Deut. 12:17; 18:4; Isa. 62:8-9; Hos. 4:11.
3. *Asis* - This is obviously alcoholic beverages (Joel 1:5; Isa. 49:26).
4. *Sekar* - This is the term “strong drink.” The Hebrew root is used in the term “drunk” or “drunkard.” It had something added to it to make it more intoxicating. It is parallel to *yayin* (cf. Prov. 20:1; 31:6; Isa. 28:7).

#### B. New Testament

1. *Oinos* - the Greek equivalent of *Yayin*.
2. *Neos oinos* (new wine) - the Greek equivalent of *tirosh* (cf. Mark 2:22).
3. *Gleuchos vinos* (sweet wine, *asis*) - wine in the early stages of fermentation (cf. Acts 2:13).

### II. Biblical Usage

#### A. Old Testament

1. Wine is a gift of God (Gen. 27:28; Ps. 104:14-15; Eccl. 9:7; Hos. 2:8-9; Joel 2:19,24; Amos 9:13; Zech. 10:7).
2. Wine is a part of a sacrificial offering (Exod. 29:40; Lev. 23:13; Num. 15:7,10; 28:14; Deut. 14:26; Judg. 9:13).
3. Wine is used as medicine (II Sam. 16:2; Prov. 31:6-7).
4. Wine can be a real problem (Noah- Gen. 9:21; Lot- Gen. 19:33,35; Samson- Judg. 16:19; Nabal- I Sam. 25:36; Uriah- II Sam. 11:13; Ammon- II Sam. 13:28; Elah- I Kin. 16:9; Benhadad- I Kin. 20:12; Rulers- Amos 6:6; and Ladies- Amos 4).
5. Wine can be abused (Prov. 20:1; 23:29-35; 31:4-5; Isa. 5:11,22; 19:14; 28:7-8; Hosea 4:11).
6. Wine was prohibited to certain groups (Priests on duty, Lev. 10:9; Ezek. 44:21; Nazarites, Num. 6; and Rulers, Prov. 31:4-5; Isa. 56:11-12; Hosea 7:5).
7. Wine is used in an eschatological setting (Amos 9:13; Joel 3:18; Zech. 9:17).

#### B. Interbiblical

1. Wine in moderation is very helpful (Ecclesiasticus 31:27-30).
2. The rabbis say, “Wine is the greatest of all medicine, where wine is lacking, then drugs are needed.” (BB 58b).

#### C. New Testament

1. Jesus changed a large quantity of water into wine (John 2:1-11).
2. Jesus drank wine (Matt. 11:18-19; Luke 7:33-34; 22:17ff).
3. Peter was accused of drunkenness on “new wine” at Pentecost (Acts 2:13).
4. Wine can be used as medicine (Mark 15:23; Luke 10:34; I Tim. 5:23).
5. Leaders are not to be abusers. This does not mean total abstainers (I Tim. 3:3,8; Titus 1:7; 2:3; I Pet. 4:3).
6. Wine used in eschatological settings (Matt. 22:1ff; Rev. 19:9).
7. Drunkenness is deplored (Matt. 24:49; Luke 11:45; 21:34; I Cor. 5:11-13; 6:10; Gal. 5:21; I Pet. 4:3; Rom. 13:13-14).

### III. Theological Insight

#### A. Dialectical tension

1. Wine is a gift from God.
2. Drunkenness is a major problem.
3. Believers in some cultures must limit their freedoms for the sake of the gospel (Matt. 15:1-20; Mark 7:1-23; I Cor. 8:10; Rom. 14:1-15:13).

#### B. Tendency to go beyond given bounds

1. God is the source of all good things (creation is “very good,” Gen. 1:31).
2. Fallen mankind has abused all of God’s gifts by taking them beyond God-given bounds.

#### C. Abuse is in us, not in things. There is nothing evil in the physical creation (cf. Mark 7:18-23; Rom. 14:14,20; I Cor. 10:25-26; I Tim. 4:4; Titus 1:15).

### IV. First Century Jewish Culture and Fermentation

- A. Fermentation begins very soon, approximately 6 hours after the grape is crushed especially in hot climates with non-hygienic conditions.
- B. Jewish tradition says that when a slight foam appeared on the surface (sign of fermentation), it is liable to the wine-tithe (*Ma aseroth* 1:7). It was called “new wine” or “sweet wine.”
- C. The primary violent fermentation was complete after one week.
- D. The secondary fermentation took about 40 days. At this state it is considered “aged wine” and could be offered on the altar (*Edhuyyoth* 6:1).
- E. Wine that had rested on its lees (old wine) was considered good, but it had to be strained well before use. F. Wine was considered to be properly aged usually after one year of fermentation. Three years was the longest period of time that wine could be safely stored. It was called “old wine” and had to be diluted with water.
- G. Only in the last 100 years with a sterile environment and chemical additives has fermentation been postponed. The ancient world could not

stop the natural process of fermentation.

#### V. Closing Statements

- A. Be sure your experience, theology, and biblical interpretation do not depreciate Jesus and first century Jewish and/or Christian culture! They were obviously not total abstainers.
- B. I am not advocating the social use of alcohol. However, many have overstated the Bible's position on this subject and now claim superior righteousness based on a cultural/denominational bias.
- C. For me, Romans 14:1-15:13 and I Corinthians 8-10 have provided insight and guidelines based on love and respect for fellow believers and the spread of the gospel in every culture, not personal freedom or judgmental criticism. If the Bible is the only source for faith and practice, then maybe we must all rethink this issue.
- D. If we push total abstinence as God's will, what do we imply about Jesus, as well as those modern cultures that regularly use wine (e.g. Europe, Israel, Argentina)?

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: THE WILL (*THELĒMA*) OF GOD

### JOHN'S GOSPEL

- Jesus came to do the Father's will (cf. 4:34; 5:30; 6:38)
- to raise up on the last day all whom the Father gave the Son (cf. 6:39)
- that all believe in the Son (cf. 6:29,40)
- answered prayer related to doing God's will (cf. 9:31 and I John 5:14)

### THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS

- doing God's will is crucial (cf. 7:21)
- doing God's will makes one brother and sister with Jesus (cf. Matt. 12:5; Mark 3:35)
- it is not God's will for any to perish (cf. Matt. 18:14; I Tim. 2:4; II Pet. 3:9)
- Calvary was the Father's will for Jesus (cf. Matt. 26:42; Luke 22:42)

### PAUL'S LETTERS

- the maturity and service of all believers (cf. Rom. 12:1-2)
- believers delivered from this evil age (cf. Gal. 1:4)
- God's will was His redemptive plan (cf. Eph. 1:5,9,11)
- believers experiencing and living the Spirit-filled life (cf. Eph. 5:17)
- believers filled with the knowledge of God (cf. Col. 1:9)
- believers made perfect and complete (cf. Col. 4:12)
- believers sanctified (cf. I Thess. 4:3)
- believers giving thanks in all things (cf. I Thess. 5:18)

### PETER'S LETTERS

- believers doing right (i.e. submitting to civil authority) and thereby silencing foolish men (cf. I Pet. 2:15)
- believers suffering (cf. I Pet. 3:17; 4:19)
- believers not living self-centered lives (cf. I Pet. 4:2)

### JOHN'S LETTERS

- believers abiding forever (cf. I John 2:17)
- believers key to answered prayer (cf. I John 5:14)

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: WITNESSES TO JESUS

The noun (*marturia*) and its verb (*martureō*) "witness" is a key term in John. There are many witnesses to Jesus:

1. John the Baptist (cf. John 1:7,8,15; 3:26,28; 5:33)
2. Jesus Himself (cf. John 3:11; 5:31; 8:13-14)
3. the Samaritan woman (cf. John 4:39)
4. God the Father (cf. John 5:32,34,37; 8:18; I John 5:9)
5. Scripture (cf. John 5:39)
6. the crowd at Lazarus' raising (cf. John 12:17)
7. the Spirit (cf. John 15:26-27; I John 5:10,11)
8. the disciples (cf. John 15:27; 19:35; I John 1:2; 4:14)
9. the author himself (cf. John 21:24)

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: WOMEN IN THE BIBLE

### I. The Old Testament

#### A. Culturally women were considered property.

1. included in list of property (Exodus 20:17)
2. treatment of slave women (Exodus 21:7-11)
3. women's vows annulable by socially responsible male (Numbers 30)
4. women as spoils of war (Deuteronomy 20:10-14; 21:10-14)

#### B. Practically there was a mutuality

1. male and female made in God's image (Genesis 1:26-27)
2. honor father and mother (Exodus 20:12 [Deut. 5:16])
3. reverence mother and father (Leviticus 19:3; 20:9)
4. men and women could be Nazarites (Numbers 6:1-2)
5. daughters have right of inheritance (Numbers 27:1-11)
6. part of covenant people (Deuteronomy 29:10-12)
7. observe teaching of father and mother (Proverbs 1:8; 6:20)
8. sons and daughters of Heman (Levite family) led music in Temple (I Chronicles 25:5-6)
9. son and daughter will prophesy in new age (Joel 2:28-29)

#### C. Women were in leadership roles

1. Moses' sister, Miriam, called a prophetess (Exodus 15:20-21)
2. women gifted by God to weave material for the Tabernacle (Exodus 35:25-26)
3. a woman, Deborah, also a prophetess (cf. Jdgs. 4:4), led all the tribes (Judges 4:4-5; 5:7)
4. Huldah was a prophetess whom King Josiah asked to read and interpret the newly-found "Book of the Law" (II Kings 22:14; II Chr. 34:22-27)
5. Queen Esther, a godly woman, saved Jews in Persia

### II. The New Testament

#### A. Culturally women in both Judaism and the Greco-Roman world were second class citizens with few rights or privileges (the exception was Macedonia)

#### B. Women in leadership roles

1. Elizabeth and Mary, godly women available to God (Luke 1-2)
2. Anna, godly woman serving at the Temple (Luke 2:36)
3. Lydia, believer and leader of a house church (Acts 16:14,40)
4. Philip's four virgin daughters were prophetesses (Acts 21:8-9)
5. Phoebe, deaconess of church at Cenchrea (Rom. 16:1)
6. Prisca (Priscilla), Paul's fellow-worker and teacher of Apollos (Acts 18:26; Rom. 16:3)
7. Mary, Tryphaena, Tryphosa, Persis, Julia, Nereus' sister, several women co-workers of Paul (Rom. 16:6-16)
8. Junia (KJV), possibly a woman apostle (Rom. 16:7)
9. Euodia and Syntyche, co-workers with Paul (Phil. 4:2-3)

### III. How does a modern believer balance the divergent biblical examples?

#### A. How does one determine historical or cultural truths, which only apply to the original context, from eternal truths valid for all churches, all believers of all ages?

1. We must take the intent of the original inspired author very seriously. The Bible is the Word of God and the only source for faith and practice
2. We must deal with the obviously historically conditioned inspired texts
  - a. the cultus (i.e. ritual and liturgy) of Israel (cf. Acts 15; Gal. 3)
  - b. first century Judaism
  - c. Paul's obviously historically conditioned statements in I Corinthians
    - (1) the legal system of pagan Rome (I Cor. 6)
    - (2) remaining a slave (I Cor. 7:20-24)
    - (3) celibacy (I Cor. 7:1-35)
    - (4) virgins (I Cor. 7:36-38)
    - (5) food sacrificed to an idol (I Cor. 10:23-33)
    - (6) unworthy actions at Lord's Supper (I Cor. 11)
3. God fully and clearly revealed Himself to a particular culture, a particular day. We must take seriously the revelation, but not every aspect of its historical accommodation. The Word of God was written in human words, addressed to a particular culture at a particular time.

#### B. Biblical interpretation must seek the original author's intent. What was he saying to his day? This is foundational and crucial for proper interpretation. But then we must apply this to our own day. Now, here is the problem with women in leadership (the real interpretive problem may be defining the term. Were there more ministries than pastors who were seen as leadership? Were deaconesses or prophetesses seen as leaders?) It is quite clear that Paul, in I Cor. 14:34-35 and I Tim. 2:9-15, is asserting that women should not take the lead in public worship! But how do I apply that today? I do not want Paul's culture or my culture to silence God's Word and will. Possibly Paul's day was too limiting, but also my day may be too open. I feel so uncomfortable saying that Paul's words and teachings are conditional, first century, local

situational truths. Who am I that I should let my mind or my culture negate an inspired author?!

However, what do I do when there are biblical examples of women leaders (even in Paul's writings, cf. Rom. 16)? A good example of this is Paul's discussion of public worship in I Cor. 11-14. In 11:5 he seems to allow women's preaching and praying in public worship with their heads covered, yet in 14:34-35 he demands they remain silent! There were deaconesses (cf. Rom. 16:1) and prophetesses (cf. Acts 21:9). It is this diversity that allows me freedom to identify Paul's comments (as relates to restrictions on women) as limited to first century Corinth and Ephesus. In both churches there were problems with women exercising their new-found freedom (cf. Bruce Winter, *Corinth After Paul Left*), which could have caused difficulty for their church in reaching their society for Christ. Their freedom had to be limited so that the gospel could be more effective.

My day is just the opposite of Paul's. In my day the gospel might be limited if trained, articulate women are not allowed to share the gospel, not allowed to lead! What is the ultimate goal of public worship? Is it not evangelism and discipleship? Can God be honored and pleased with women leaders? The Bible as a whole seems to say "yes"!

I want to yield to Paul; my theology is primarily Pauline. I do not want to be overly influenced or manipulated by modern feminism! However, I feel the church has been slow to respond to obvious biblical truths, like the inappropriateness of slavery, racism, bigotry, and sexism. It has also

been slow to respond appropriately to the abuse of women in the modern world. God in Christ set free the slave and the woman. I dare not let a culture-bound text reshackle them.

One more point: as an interpreter I know that Corinth was a very disrupted church. The charismatic gifts were prized and flaunted. Women may have been caught up in this. I also believe that Ephesus was being affected by false teachers who were taking advantage of women and using them as surrogate speakers in the house churches of Ephesus.

C. Suggestions for further reading

*How to Read the Bible For All Its Worth* by Gordon Fee and Doug Stuart (pp. 61-77)

*Gospel and Spirit: Issues in New Testament Hermeneutics* by Gordon Fee

*Hard Sayings of the Bible* by Walter C. Kaiser, Peter H. Davids, F. F. Bruce and Manfred T. Branch (pp. 613-616; 665-667)

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: PAUL'S USE OF WOMEN IN MINISTRY

Notice all of the women in Rom. 16 who were fellow-workers with Paul in the gospel (cf. Phil. 4:3): Phoebe in v. 1; Prisca in v. 3; Mary in v. 6; Junia (or Junias—if so it was a man) in v. 7; Tryphaena and Tryphosa in v. 12; Persis in v. 12; "his mother" in v. 13; Julia in v. 15; and "his sister" in v. 15. Be careful of dogmatism in the area of women in ministry. All believers are gifted (cf. I Cor. 12:7,11); all believers are full-time ministers (cf. Eph. 4:12). In this list we have a woman deacon, Phoebe, and a possible woman apostle, Junia (cf. Joel 2:28; Acts 2:16-21). It is difficult to know how to handle this issue biblically because of the seemingly paradoxical statements of Paul such as I Cor. 11:4-5 compared with 14:34.

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## SPECIAL TOPIC: THEORIES RELATED TO "WOMEN KEEP SILENT"

- I. This is not a statement from Paul, but a later addition (cf. Gordon Fee, *New International Commentary*, "I Corinthians," pp. 699-708) usually based on some Greek manuscripts (i.e. MSS D, F, G; one MS of the Vulgate; Latin church Father Ambrosiaster, after A.D. 384) which put vv. 33-34 after v. 40.
- II. Paul is quoting the letter from the Church, which states the false views of the factious group. Paul quotes it to deny it. However, this protracted discussion (i.e. vv. 33-35 or 36) does not fit Paul's earlier "slogans." It is not a simple statement modified by Paul, but a sustained argument.
- III. Paul is referring to a problem group of women who are disrupting the worship service either by tongues, prophecy, or questions. Their exuberance in their new freedom in Christ was causing cultural difficulties in evangelism and worship.
- IV. Paul is limiting women, not in public prophesying, but in evaluating other prophets' (i.e. male prophets) messages, thereby implying an authority over them (James Hurley, *Men and Women in Biblical Perspective*, pp. 185-194 and Wayne Grudem, *The Gift of Prophecy in I Corinthians*, pp. 239-255).
- V. Paul is dealing with different situations in 11:5 and 14:34.
  - A. One is house church (i.e. 11:5) and one is the gathered church (i.e. 14:34).
  - B. 11:5 is addressed to single women and 14:34 to married women.
  - C. Some women were unruly or too outspoken.

The variety and number of interpretations shows the uncertainty of modern interpreters related to the worship practices of Corinth and for that matter, first century Christian congregations. Was the problem

    1. local (i.e. uniquely Corinth)
    2. first century Roman culture
    3. abuse of giftedness
    4. attempt to dominate by women
    5. attempt to impose a Jewish structure
    6. false view of a factious group at Corinth

## **SPECIAL TOPIC: THE WOMEN WHO FOLLOWED JESUS**

- A. The first mention of the women followers of Jesus who helped Him and the Apostolic band is Luke 8:1-3.
  - 1. Mary, who was called Magdalene (v. 2)
    - a. Matt. 27:56,61; 28:1
    - b. Mark 15:40,47; 16:1,9
    - c. Luke 8:2; 24:10
    - d. John 19:25; 20:1,11,16,18
  - 2. Joanna, the wife of Chuza (Herod's servant, v. 3) is listed also in Luke 24:10
  - 3. Susanna (v. 3)
  - 4. "and many others who were contributing to their support out of their private means" (v. 3)
- B. A group of women are mentioned as being present at the crucifixion
  - 1. Matthew's list
    - a. Mary Magdalene (27:56)
    - b. Mary the mother of James and Josephus (27:56)
    - c. the mother of the sons of Zebedee (27:56)
  - 2. Mark's list
    - a. Mary Magdalene (25:40)
    - b. Mary the mother of James the Less and Joses (15:40)
    - c. Salome (15:40)
  - 3. Luke says only, "the women who accompanied Him from Galilee" (23:49)
  - 4. John's list
    - a. Mary, Jesus' mother (19:25)
    - b. His mother's sister (19:25)
    - c. Mary of Clopas [KJ Cleophas, this could mean wife of Clopas or daughter of Clopas] (19:25)
    - d. Mary Magdalene (19:25)
- C. A group of women is mentioned observing the place of Jesus' burial
  - 1. Matthew's list
    - a. Mary Magdalene (27:61)
    - b. the other Mary (27:61)
  - 2. Mark's list
    - a. Mary Magdalene (15:47)
    - b. Mary the mother of Joses (15:47)
  - 3. Luke says only, "the women who had come with Him out of Galilee" (23:55)
  - 4. John has no record of the women seeing the tomb
- D. A group of women came to the tomb early Sunday morning
  - 1. Matthew's list
    - a. Mary Magdalene (28:1)
    - b. the other Mary (28:1)
  - 2. Mark's list
    - a. Mary Magdalene (16:1)
    - b. Mary the mother of James (16:1)
    - c. Salome (16:1)
  - 3. Luke's list
    - a. "they came to the tomb" (24:1-5,24)
      - (1) Mary Magdalene (24:10)
      - (2) Joanna (24:10)
      - (3) Mary the mother of James (24:10)
  - 4. John lists only Mary Magdalene (20:1,11)
- E. The women are mentioned as being present in the upper room (Acts 1:14)
  - 1. "the women" (1:14)
  - 2. Mary the mother of Jesus (1:14)
- F. The exact relationship between the different women in these different lists is uncertain. Mary Magdalene obviously has a predominate role. A good article on "women" in Jesus' life and ministry is found in *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels* published by IVP, pp. 880-886.